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In consequence of numerous applications from persons desirous of completing their Sets of the SATURDAY REVIEW, all the early Numbers are now being reprinted; and in August the Publisher will be able to deliver single copies of each number from the commencement, at 6d. each copy, unstamped. He will also be prepared to supply entire volumes, bound in cloth and lettered.

THE FRENCH PRESS AND THE PARIS ELECTIONS.

THE wisest thing that a man can do when he has sustained a signal and unexpected reverse, is to bear it as well as he can, and appear to mind it as little as possible. The French Government does not seem by any means to have mastered this elementary maxim of political philosophy. The unscrupulous exertions which were employed in the recent struggle to secure the return of the official candidates stamped the contest with an importance which has given to their defeat a most grave significance. In the elections of June, the conflict of opposing interests among the adversaries of the Government gave an immense advantage to the superior organization of the Imperial partisans; but the renewed contest which has just taken place in three of the electoral divisions of Paris was a stand-up fight between the Government and its opponents, who had united for the purpose of giving it a marked repulse. The violence of the official organs before the elections, and the silence which they have maintained since the result was known, equally testify the mortification and disappointment which they must have experienced at so decisive a defeat.

It is certainly a symptom which the Emperor of the FRENCH can ill afford to neglect, that one-half of Paris has deliberately recorded its disapprobation of his rule, in spite of all the oburgations of the official hacks in the press, and of all the pressure which a centralized Executive can bring to bear on the metropolis. We do not mean to assert that, in Paris at least, the elections have been unfairly managed—the result, indeed, in itself refutes such a supposition. Nevertheless, any one who knows anything of Ministerial influence even in England, when brought to bear upon a dockyard borough, may form some idea of the advantages which such a Government as that of France, where every street-sweeper is an *employé*, must enjoy in a popular election. Yet, after due notice and long preparation on both sides, the Imperial Government has been beaten in a pitched battle in the very centre and heart of the Empire. It is Paris—that Paris to win which so much has been sacrificed, and so much risked—for which bubble schemes have been projected, in order to enrich the speculators of the Bourse at the expense of rustic simpletons—for which that monstrous and extravagant expenditure has been incurred which has converted the old picturesque sites of the capital of France into a monotonous wilderness of stone—for which balls of unheard-of magnificence have been devised, and dinners of incredible luxury served up—it is this Paris, dazzled by Imperial splendour, and governed by Imperial gold, which has given so sharp a bite to the hand that caressed it.

We hear it said, "Oh, this is always the way with the Parisians—they are never contented with their ruler—it signifies nothing to them whether they have a good Government or a bad one, since they are equally hostile to all." It seems to us that this is just one of those superficial cut-and-dried formulas by which people who fancy themselves very wise dispose of difficulties which they are unable to meet. To adopt this contemptuous tone towards a people standing in the very first rank of intelligence and cultivation, is alike foolish and impertinent. By what title is it that we pretend to affirm that a system of Government under which no Englishman, at any period of our history,

would have been contented to live for an instant, is good enough for a Frenchman? The majority which has returned the five Opposition representatives in Paris is composed, in great part at least, of the most respectable, the most educated, and the most substantial portion of the community. It is not the *canaille* which overthrew the throne of Louis PHILIPPE that has sent General CAVAIGNAC—the Dictator of June—to fight the battle at once of liberty and of order in the Chambers. It is well worthy of remark that the successful Opposition candidates are all men respectable by their character and moderate in their views; and certainly the Parisians are not so entirely without grievances that they cannot be permitted to indulge in the moderate freedom which the Constitution of 1852 assigns to them without incurring the charge of a revolutionary and subversive hostility to all Governments. How is it possible that a people which has drunk of the cup of liberty to intoxication can quietly acquiesce in a system of repression the most vulgar and the most degrading to which a great nation was ever subjected? There was something (to borrow a word of their own) *grandiose* about the tyranny of the great NAPOLEON, which made it less intolerable, in so far as it was less contemptible. But how is it to be supposed that a people among whom intellect and genius are perhaps extravagantly idolized can do otherwise than resist a domination of BILLAULTS, and FOULDS, and WALEWSKIS?

As if to supply a signal justification of the hostile blow which has been struck at the Imperial Government, the MINISTER of the INTERIOR has committed a fresh outrage on public decency in the suspension of the *Assemblée Nationale*. That journal is certainly not one which can command, either in France or abroad, any very high respect by the temper and the tone in which it is conducted. At the same time, the fact of its suspension shows the lengths to which the French Government is disposed to go in gagging the expression of public opinion. M. BILLAULT would have acted more wisely if he had refrained from pointing out the grounds on which he founds this very foolish and oppressive stretch of authority. But as, in the decree, he extracts the passage for which he thinks fit to suspend one of the few surviving journals of Paris, it may be worth while to see what it is that a newspaper is forbidden, at the risk of instant abolition, to say. The following is the passage in question—it is taken from an article published the day after the Paris contest, entitled "A Cool Word about the Elections:"—

It would be difficult to find in the elections just terminated one of those free and spontaneous expressions of public opinion which do not allow even the most incredulous to doubt the union between the country and its Government. It is indeed convenient, in appealing to the nation, to give at once the question and the answer; but then this answer must not be appealed to as a striking demonstration of public opinion. The rural communes, it is true, have had a great share in contributing to the general result of the elections, but they have voted under the influence of the Administration, and those influences must be taken into account when the opposition and abstention which are to be remarked in the cities are contrasted with the eagerness and fidelity of the rural elections.

Certainly, if any discussion at all was to be permitted on the subject of the elections, one can hardly conceive remarks more fairly within the sphere of legitimate opposition. The MINISTER of the INTERIOR, however, seems of a different opinion, and accompanies his extract with the following trenchant commentary:—"Considering that these allegations, whatever may be the skilfulness in which they are wrapped up, are equally false and malevolent, that the most perfect liberty has presided over the electoral contest, and that the Government cannot allow the five million suffrages to be calumniated with impunity, which in every part of the country, both in the cities and the rural districts, have given it their loyal support, I order that *L'Assemblée Nationale* be suspended for two months from the 8th of July instant." M. BILLAULT may stop the mouth of the

Assemblée Nationale, but we doubt very much whether this precious stroke of statesmanship will go far to convince sceptics that "the most perfect liberty has presided over the electoral contest." If this sagacious Minister had all the confidence which he pretends in the "five million suffrages," he might, we think, have left them to protect themselves from the calumnies of the *Assemblée Nationale*.

The same number of the *Mopiteur* contains another pretty specimen of this style of Ministerial editing. A paper called the *Estafette* had published the following apparently very harmless remarks:—"In spite of the assertions of certain journals, we maintain what we have said of the significance of the Paris elections. Yes; the capital is the political expression of the whole of France, because its population is composed of citizens recruited from all, even the smallest, seats of population. Yes; the vote of June 22nd, the return of Messrs. CARNOT and GOUDCHAUX, and the relative majority obtained by General CAVAIGNAC have a meaning which has been appreciated by the Press throughout all Europe." If a newspaper is permitted to discuss an election at all, we should have supposed it might at least have been excused for attributing more importance to one constituency than another. But such a liberty as this is wholly inconsistent with the "fundamental principle" of the MINISTER of the INTERIOR, who visits the *Estafette* with the following lecture on the rights of majorities and the duty of minorities:—"Considering that, under the *régime* of universal suffrage, the respect due to the authority of the majority is a fundamental principle which minorities cannot be permitted to deny or bring in doubt—and considering that to pretend to find the political expression of France in the vote of a few constituencies, when the whole of France has spoken, and clearly expressed its opinion, is to attack the constitutional authority of the five million votes which form the immense majority gained by the candidates of the Government—I order that a second warning be given to the *Estafette*." It is certainly difficult to suppose that a gentleman who acts on so peculiar a political system would be very particular as to the arts by which a desired majority is to be got up. It is astonishing that the EMPEROR has not the prudence to save his Government from the ridicule, as well as the odium, to which it is exposed by the mischievous blunders of such men.

The repeated success of the Republican Opposition in Paris convinces us more than ever that the return of General CAVAIGNAC and his colleagues offers a fair and substantial prospect of the dawn of better things in France. It is impossible that five members freely elected by half the constituency of Paris, acting in concert, and compelling a discussion of public affairs, should not exercise a most powerful and salutary influence on the system of Government. We are by no means convinced that the EMPEROR himself may not be willing to accept the existence of a power which would save him the trouble of continually watching over the *bêtises* of M. BILLAULT and his colleagues. We can hardly believe that General CAVAIGNAC will commit—we will not say the error—but the crime against his country of declining the post to which he has been called. He is a man who, by the integrity of his character, the well-known disinterestedness of his career, and his resolute firmness of mind, is well fitted to fight the battle of liberty in the arena which is opened to him. The task will no doubt be an arduous one, but it is one which no patriotic Frenchman has the right to decline. General CAVAIGNAC saved France in 1848 from the horrors of anarchy, but his work will not be accomplished till he has done his part in liberating her from a degrading and demoralizing despotism.

MADELEINE SMITH.

THE verdict in MADELEINE SMITH's trial is "Not Proven." It declares nothing. The case, then, as they say in Germany, shifts from the actual to the ideal. The guilt or innocence of the accused will henceforth be like Queen MARY's guilt or innocence—it will be a moot point for moralists. As such we treat it. If we seem to assume the alternative of guilt, MADELEINE SMITH is to us only *nomini umbra*. She is an historical and debateable character; and an inquiry into her criminality becomes a question of purely moral and psychological interest. We say, then, that, on the hypothesis of her guilt, it may be that no substantial harm has been done by the verdict. The result, lame and imperfect as it is, acknowledges

that there are some things too terrible to be within the exact compass of human proof. Had this awful drama been thoroughly played out—had guilt received its perfect award here—had the death of the murderess, supposing her to be such, atoned, as people say, for her crime—it is possible that half the impressiveness of the lesson would have been lost. It would have descended from the highest tragedy to a comparatively common event. It may be that the most solemn lessons of life require an element of mystery and doubt. There are things which are better reserved for a higher tribunal. In the face of such a deed, for whatever purpose permitted, and for whatever end overruled, human authority retires. Even justice declines to interfere in the presence of something beyond our powers to deal with. The most inhuman, and perhaps unparalleled, of crimes is in some sort lifted above the legitimate sphere of human punishment. MADELEINE SMITH's guilt, if it be guilt, is out of the reach of our righteous dealing. It was something better than heathen piety and reverence which made the poet represent CLYTEMNESTRA entering her dreadful appeal as one beyond man's judgment. Even to those most convinced of the guilt of the accused, we say that things are best as they are.

To parallel this case with the familiar histories of PALMER and RUSH, or with those of BRINVILLIERS and LAFFARGE, as is the fashion of the newspapers, is futile. MADELEINE SMITH's case, if she is guilty, has that element which, so long as human nature is simply human, must enter into the wildest forms of crime, and which scarcely appears in the ordinary *causes célèbres*. It is as though the sexual passion were, in its consequences, necessary in the highest form even of evil. Yet it is not any one single and simple passion—revenge, or lust, or avarice—which can end in such a catastrophe as this. It is in the mixture of motives, the complexity of passions, the conflict of sins—the seven devils wrestling with each other, as well as with the victim—that the unearthly grandeur as well as horror of the deed with which she was charged consists. Passion leads many a man to murder his mistress—jealousy leads many a woman to murder her lover, even in the very frenzy of affection—cold-blooded ambition and interest prompt to murder, in order to get rid of an inconvenient obstacle to respectability and a fair standing with the world—but, on the hypothesis of MADELEINE SMITH's guilt, we have each and all, and yet none of them, as adequate motives. The problem to solve—and it is inscrutable, because, as far as we know, absolutely without example—is the co-existence of that burning intensity of mere sexual passion which indisputably led MADELEINE SMITH to discard every restraint, even of common decency, that frailty so generally throws over the acts of sin, with a cool-settled malignity of self-possession, a deliberate hypocrisy in counterfeiting rapturous affection, which, for the credit of human nature, is unparalleled. And yet this at least must have been so, if she is guilty. The counsel for the defence never accounted for the fact—an indisputable one—that the letters to MIXNOCH, and the last letters to her seducer (if that is to be the word), with all the old passion at least pretended, were of the same date. Whether MADELEINE SMITH poisoned L'ANGELIER or not, her parallel correspondence with him and with MIXNOCH in March is established; and this is the moral anomaly in presence of which the fact of murder is a mere sequence.

As to the legal evidence, and its force, we have reviewed it elsewhere. MADELEINE SMITH was not convicted, because it was not proved that she and L'ANGELIER met on the night before his death. This single circumstance compelled the verdict. That she made the assignation for Saturday is, however, but a very faint disproof of its having taken place on Sunday. It is not true, as was asserted by the counsel for the defence, that no interviews took place in Blythe-wood-square except when the prisoner's parents were away from home. The flaw in the chain of evidence against the prisoner was the failure of proof as to the fact of access on the Sunday night; and, perhaps, the solitary circumstance, though by no means a conclusive one, in favour of the possibility of L'ANGELIER having died by other hands than those of his paramour, is, that although he had on a previous occasion expressed his suspicions of poison at her hands, he did not in the death agony repeat them, at least to his landlady, but is said to have attributed his illness to a bilious attack. Yet, on the other hand, stands the fact that her first purchases of poison, however notorious, synchronize with L'ANGELIER's successive illnesses. We by no means dispute the propriety of the verdict. It is legally, technically, even morally, correct—the murder was Not

Proven. But the very nature of the verdict leaves us at full liberty to canvass the moral antecedents of the event, and to reason about what is not disproved. The DEAN of FACULTY observed strongly and skilfully on the improbability of this burning, passionate, guilty girl being suddenly transformed into a savage, cold, deliberate murderess. This was the main moral argument for the defence. If anything, however, could account for this, we think it is to be found in L'ANGELIER's character; and how far this leads to a presumption of guilt or innocence is a question of moral evidence. As such only we treat it; and we say that what he was proved to be would go far to solve the moral difficulty urged in the prisoner's defence. His was just the sort of mind to work this horrible change in MADELEINE SMITH. A meaner and more contemptible scoundrel it would be difficult to conceive; and probably his low, selfish character prompted that sort of unhealthy popular sympathy with MADELEINE SMITH which seems to prevail, at any rate, in Edinburgh. A profligate, vain adventurer, boasting, as it seems, of his *bonnes fortunes*, and trafficking with this *liaison*, as perhaps with others, as a means of advancement—this is what L'ANGELIER was. If he really meant seriously to marry, what obstacle was there, except on his own side, to the talked-of elopement? To say that a man who had access at any hour of the night to Mr. SMITH's house, could not, on one of these occasions, have removed her and married her with the easy liberality of the Scotch marriage law, is on the face of it absurd. But we do believe that, as a further knowledge of L'ANGELIER's miserable character broke upon MADELEINE SMITH, the insight into the man who could hold this girl's shame over her, and who could resist the terrific pathos of her shuddering, shivering appeals for mercy—appeals unequalled in the whole range of tragic vehemence—may account for this moral change. The deep fountains of her passion were, on discovering her paramour's character, frozen up. She found that she had ventured everything upon an unworthy object, and the very depth of her love was changed, on the complete and perfect sense of utter loss, into the corresponding depth of hatred.

This is the real characteristic of women. In many cases of adultery, it is not half so much caused by guilty love on the woman's part, as by unquenchable hatred towards the husband. This is what Lord ELDON meant when he said that in almost every such case the husband was to blame. It is no extenuation of MADELEINE SMITH's guilt—we treat the case of course on abstract grounds, and assume her guilt only argumentatively, and for the sake of the moral problem—to dwell upon L'ANGELIER's despicable character. All we say is, that it accounts for what the advocate calls "the inexplicable transition from the gentle loving girl to the savage grandeur of Medea." It accounts, too, for something else which seems to strike shallow observers with much surprise. It accounts for what is called the improbability of the murder being committed by one who was all along in the man's power, and whose only chance of recovering the letters was in his life. It is said that MADELEINE SMITH could not have murdered L'ANGELIER while the letters were in his possession, because then they would be sure to fall into the hands of those who would make, as they did, the most fatal use of them. But if our view is to be supported, it is not fear of detection which would operate either way. It is simple, naked vengeance—the solitary purpose to destroy an object of hatred—which would overrule a woman in such a case. It is not that she either thinks or cares for herself, so that she can but punish one against whom a whole hell of hatred is stirred up. And further, this view explains the icy self-possession of a prisoner under such circumstances. It is not mere bravado, not stupor, not unparalleled acting, not a mere superhuman effort of the strong will, which accounts for a guilty person supporting even such a trial as this with a jaunty and unconcerned air. We can quite believe that there are moral and spiritual conditions in which feeling is simply obliterated, and everything swallowed up in one absorbing object—in which, as in the Eastern tale, the whole moral nature is converted into solid, unimpressible black marble. Great wrong does this—affection utterly thrown away does this. The sheer despair of receding and retrieving the past produces an unnatural sense of calmness, and even satisfaction, in crime. BEATRICE CENCI, after her act of parricide, exhibited the exact parallel of MADELEINE SMITH. A mere desire to marry a richer suitor, and to stand well with society, would not explain the crime in such a character as we are considering. Hatred

whose very intensity almost sanctifies it—and perhaps, when the moral sense is gone, lifts it into a sort of justice—would alone account for the deed, and account also for such easy demeanour at the trial. Hatred such as we can conceive here, if guilty, to have been, does not pale the cheek or check the elastic step. One possessed by it is dead to all other sentiments. It does not interfere with animal life, and in its presence—in its possession, rather—all other existence is dead. One thing alone—we speak only as moralists—appears to be totally inconsistent with such bearing; and that is, conscious innocence. It was not innocence which could say—

The deed is done,
And what may follow now regards not me:
Consequence to me
Is as the wind which strikes the solid rock,
But shakes it not.

It was a parricide who said this, and who slept well, and was beautiful and self-possessed up to the moment of her death.

To recur to our first thought. We have said that, if MADELEINE SMITH is guilty, it were perhaps well that human vengeance should retire from an unequal conflict with such crime. *Musat tacito justitia timore*. We do not say that such a criminal is best left to the avenging furies of conscience, and that a life of such punishment is the heaviest doom that we can in mercy inflict even upon her, if guilty. We dismiss this commonplace view. If guilty, she is beyond this sort of retribution. In such a case we have little to expect from the salutary terrors of remorse. As to repentance, we say nothing of it. But, as regards society, we think that the lesson is better and more impressive as it stands. There are thousands who have fallen into the sin of this miserable pair. In all sorts of society, and among the most refined of our social respectabilities, as well as in the experience of the village poor, that particular frailty is—can we venture to deny it?—far from uncommon. How stands the warning? It may have reduced MADELEINE SMITH—the burning, passionate Juliet of decent society, fresh from the school-room, and in the very heart of all the domestic sanctities—to the murderess of L'ANGELIER. It must have reduced her to that profligate abasement of character which, anyhow, is a world's wonder. It must have produced that degradation which, without a blush, could write the letters to L'ANGELIER, and which would have entered MINNOCH's house and home as a bride. It may have brought L'ANGELIER to his doom from the hands of his paramour—it must have brought him to a dog's death, either at his own hands, or at those of somebody whom he had somehow foully wronged. And the simple fact that we have our desperate choice in this alternative of horrors, only shows what may be going on in the inmost core of all that is apparently pure and respectable.

ITALIAN INSURRECTIONS.

WE have uniformly abstained from employing language which should even seem to fall in with the prejudices of Englishmen on the subject of the Italian democrats. The vulgar commonplaces about Signor MAZZINI and his followers are in part the product of gross ignorance, and, we fear, in a far greater degree, of that flunkeylike sycophancy to established systems which is too often the only acquisition brought home by our countrymen from Continental travel. It is, moreover, a very difficult question whether, *a priori*, and apart from direct experimental proofs, a universal Italian Republic is not the only imaginable solution of the difficulties of Italy. The Italian democrats are to be blamed, not because they have dreamed of a Republican form of Government, but because they obstinately neglect, denounce, and thwart the great experiment which is pending in Piedmont. To the foolishness of refusing to recognise the success of the Sardinian Constitution as an element in their theories, they have now added the unpardonable and almost incredible crime of practically treating the Sardinian Government exactly as if it were the Government of Naples. An insurrection, evidently long concerted and carefully pre-arranged, has broken out at several points of the Italian Peninsula, and has apparently been suppressed at all. Unfortunately, one of the points at which it has broken out and been suppressed is Genoa. The history of political ingratitude never showed a blacker page.

It is remarkable that, whether this revolt at Genoa succeeded or failed, it carried with it about equal risks to Sardinian, and therefore to Italian, freedom. If the Piedmontese monarchy had been overthrown, it requires but a

superficial knowledge of European affairs to see that the neutrality which now prevails in Italy could not have been maintained for a month in presence of the rage and terror of the despotic powers. It may indeed be that England would have been still inclined to protect the independence of republicanized Sardinia; but English foreign policy is entirely subordinate to that of France, and our resentment, perhaps not very fervid at best, would have evaporated in diplomatic protests. On the other hand, the miscarriage of this revolutionary attempt—and no human being can doubt that miscarriage was certain from the first—involved a peculiar danger to the free institutions of Piedmont. To understand this requires some knowledge of the extent to which the liberties of Sardinia are dependent on the honesty of the KING, and of the tactics which the reactionary party are steadily practising. The organs of the priesthood and small nobility, and their representatives in the Parliament, scarcely affect to believe that they will ever have a majority of the people on their side. They can only make themselves count in the discussions of the press, and in the divisions and debates of the Chambers, by allying themselves for the moment with ultra-democratic malcontents. It is exclusively against VICTOR EMMANUEL that their batteries are aimed. To him are addressed their speeches, their homilies, and their leading articles. They work in turn upon every one of the weak points which are usually found in the character of an Italian sovereign—superstition, love of power, and cowardice. They are perpetually dwelling on the peace of mind which good Princes enjoy when they are in amity with the Holy Father. They hint insidiously that family losses, when they follow each other in quick succession, are evidences of Divine displeasure. They tell the King of the power of his fathers which he has surrendered, and the heritage of his children which he has imperilled. They show him the despotic Monarchies of Europe, and the glory of them, and try to make him feel that all the sweets of absolute rule are within his grasp. They assure him that his throne is tottering—that the men who pretend to serve him are filching away bit after bit of his legitimate authority—and that the constitutional system is a mere prelude and preface to a godless and kingless anarchy. What a windfall must the outbreak at Genoa be to a party prosecuting such a design as this! For the first time, they have a fact to second their assertion that revolution is as much alive in the Sardinian States as in any other part of Italy. Above all, they can point to the ineffable insult conveyed in classing Piedmont with the other Italian Governments. The King of NAPLES is the *caput lupinum* of Italian liberalism; and yet the circle of insurrections has been so arranged, that he suffers no more and no less than a sovereign who has been much more loyal to freedom than the professed devotees of freedom have been to him.

We believe that VICTOR EMMANUEL's integrity of purpose is beyond all question. He has kept an even course amid trials too poignant, and temptations too alluring, for us to doubt a moment of his sincerity and of the strength of his convictions. But, at the same time, the solicitations to which he is exposed are notoriously unceasing; and there is a peculiar painfulness in the position of a Prince who can never expect to purchase spiritual comfort except at the expense of submission to the Holy See. Signor MAZZINI and the Genoese Democrats must have known that they were strengthening the hands of the reactionaries; and in this consciousness lies their condemnation. There are other considerations, too, which might have been expected to weigh with them, were they less blinded by enthusiasm and less bigoted to the *jus divinum* of Republics. The government they intended to establish would have been a sheer tyranny if they had succeeded in rearing it. Outside Genoa, there is hardly a Republican in all Piedmont. If the people of the Sardinian dominions were polled by what is called manhood suffrage, there would be found a great majority in favour of the Constitutional system, a barely respectable minority for Absolutism and reconciliation with the POPE, but not Democrats enough to swear by. It is, in fact, a feeble fraction of the community which has been seeking to impose by violence its crotchets on the rest. And the worst part of the matter is, that this attempt at revolution has only been tried on failure of all the legitimate means of attracting popular sympathy. When the Mazzinists first began to talk and write treason at Genoa, the Government, not wisely but not unnaturally, attempted to bring them to justice; but the Genoese juries would not convict, and after several defeats the Public

Prosecutor retired from the contest. Since then, the *Italia del Popolo* has preached transcendental anarchy, and slandered the institutions which protected it, with the most perfect impunity—nothing worse having befallen it than an extreme and rather ridiculous penury of subscribers. This last inconvenience was, however, an increasing one; and, as there were French cynics who attributed the Revolution of 1848 to the desire of converting a starving Radical newspaper into a Government organ, so there are now some disbelievers in MAZZINI who explain the Genoese outbreak by a similar necessity. It is, at all events, certain that the distaste of the Piedmontese for Republicanism is so rooted, that, supposing the revolution had succeeded and Signor MAZZINI had been publicly crowned with laurel at Turin by Miss JULIA WHITE, we do not see what would have been left to him except to enforce his special system of Government by as stern a tyranny as that which tramples on all virtue, honesty, and intelligence at Florence, Naples, and Rome.

THE LORD-LIEUTENANT.

MR. ROEBUCK, in his capacity of Public Prosecutor, has indicted the LORD-LIEUTENANT of Ireland—not the Earl of CARLISLE in the concrete, but the abstract Viceroy—as a common nuisance; and the vote of the House of Commons, while it has preserved the office from immediate extinction, is almost as ambiguous in its import as the verdict of Not Proven on Miss MADELEINE SMITH. When the friends of an institution can find no better way of defending it than by saying that the present is not a convenient time for abolishing it, one begins to question its longevity. But this is what the House of Commons has in effect done by meeting Mr. ROEBUCK's proposition with the previous question. Henceforth the Dublin parody of Royal State must be considered as a matter to the permanence of which Parliament declines to commit itself, and which, in fact, continues from day to day like the tenure of an Irish cottier, subject to a notice to quit which may be enforced whenever an eligible substitute can be found. But there are many political as well as legal contests, in which possession is worth more than all the reasoning in the world. If the continuance of the LORD LIEUTENANT's office depended on any of the arguments which have been urged in its favour, we should recommend Lord CARLISLE to pack up without delay. But those who would change the mode of administration which has existed in Ireland for centuries, must do something more than call upon its supporters to point out its utility. Until some practical scheme is suggested by which to replace the machinery of the Castle, neither the denunciations of Mr. ROEBUCK, nor the ridicule of the Member for Dungarvon, will do much to pull down the mock throne of the Irish Viceroy. Parliament is seldom wanting in the practical sense which once embodied itself in the famous question, How is the Queen's Government to be carried on? and it will never destroy the Viceroyalty until it has found out how the business of Ireland can be more efficiently administered.

Meanwhile, the Lord-Lieutenancy can hardly be said to stand upon its own merits, for it is very hard to discover that it has any merits at all. One Irish gentleman considers the maintenance of the office a matter of contract to which England pledged herself at the time of the Union; and another, even at this day, regards with awe and apprehension the consequences of leaving Ireland without a watch-dog to guard her against rebellion. The Members for Dublin think that the honour of Ireland requires the presence of a tinsel king to keep up house rents, and attract lords spiritual and temporal to the Irish metropolis. The immense encouragement afforded to art, science, and commerce by the Viceroyal Court is the strong point of another Irish patriot; and a very strong point it would be if it were only true. Add to these considerations Lord PALMERSTON's businesslike view, that it is convenient to have some one readily accessible to Hibernian complainants, and the arguments in favour of the institution are exhausted.

MR. DISRAELI may philosophize about the unreality of every kind of public pageantry, and may question both the English and the Parliamentary propriety of Mr. ROEBUCK's accusations. But the leader of the Opposition knows very well what a "sham" is, and all his ingenuity failed to prove that the LORD-LIEUTENANT was anything more than a phantom of authority. It is mere sophistry to say that the

objections urged would suffice to condemn all ceremony and pageantry whatever. If the Viceroy of Ireland had been put on his trial before the commonest of common juries, only an unusually bold advocate would have ventured on drawing such a parallel as Mr. DISRAELI thought good enough for the House of Commons. If the LORD-LIEUTENANT was a *papier maché* king, as Mr. ROEBUCK very happily designated him, similar objections, says the Member for Bucks, would apply to the highest offices of State, and, if it were not almost blasphemy to say so, even to the Monarchy itself. But a less acute man than Mr. DISRAELI might have seen that such suggestions do not meet the case at all. There may be some speculators shallow enough to condemn external pomp and show as an absurdity in any case, but this is not the ground on which the Irish Viceroyalty is attacked. Pageantry is anything but a mockery and a sham when it is the symbol of real authority; but when outside glitter has nothing substantial to support it, it is much more likely to excite ridicule than to command respect. No one has ventured to assert that the LORD-LIEUTENANT possesses any power at all correspondent to the state which he assumes. His functions are scarcely so high as those of an Under-Secretary of State; and if the scheme which Lord JOHN RUSSELL proposed in 1850 were carried out, the new SECRETARY OF STATE would have much more independent power in the conduct of Irish business than is now entrusted either to the LORD-LIEUTENANT himself, or to the CHIEF SECRETARY, by whose leading-strings he is supposed to be guided.

In 1850, it is true, the idea was abandoned—partly on account of the disinclination of Parliament to create a new Secretary of State, but mainly because the Duke of WELLINGTON declared that he could not answer for the safety of Ireland without a resident Viceroy to keep down her rebellious tendencies. Both these objections have lost their force in the last few years. The prejudice against appointing a new Great Officer of State has been got over for another purpose; and no very injurious results—some people say no results at all—have followed the creation of a fourth Secretaryship of State. Ireland herself has furnished the answer to the military objection. The proposal of Lord JOHN RUSSELL in 1850 may have been premature, but no one can now maintain—least of all should Irishmen say—that the sister country requires a quasi-king to coax or kick her into reluctant loyalty. This was, in truth, the real purpose of the Viceroyalty from the earliest times; and it is certainly strange that any Irishman should be found to resist the abolition of an office which is nothing but a badge of conquest.

It is because Scotland was not a conquered country that she has never enjoyed the questionable privilege of an unreal Court; and although the social differences between the countries may require different modes of administration, there is no reason why Ireland as well as Scotland should not, in some form or other, be placed under the ostensible, as she is under the actual, direction of the Cabinet. It may or may not be desirable to have a representative of the Government in Dublin, gifted with the patience to endure the multitudinous applications for redress or emolument which may be expected from the eager and imaginative temperament of the Hibernian race. But in what one particular is such a Minister made more efficient by converting him into a gingerbread king? We know of but one end which can be served by giving the form of Royalty to a mere delegate of the Ministry; and that is one which has always been disavowed, and which either is or ought to be abandoned, now that the disaffection which was its only excuse has ceased to exist. The paltry splendour of the Castle may serve purposes of intrigue better than the office of a Secretary of State would do. For any higher object it is useless. There have been times when it was thought necessary, and perhaps was necessary, to manage Ireland by alternate applications of corruption and oppression. Any one who believes that such a necessity still exists may reasonably insist on the maintenance of the Lord-Lieutenancy. But those who hold, as we do, that the time has come when it may be possible to govern Irishmen as rational men, instead of treating them as fractious children, cannot consistently desire the continuance of an office whose whole scope and design was to superintend the purchase of incipient rebels and the castigation of those who were too pure or too exacting to be bought.

OUDE BEFORE PARLIAMENT.

WHATEVER may be the eventual decision with respect to the petition of the Queen and Princes of OUDE which Sir FITZROY KELLY is about to present to the House of Commons, there can be no doubt that it demands the respectful consideration of the Parliament and public of Great Britain. Were it only that an aged lady, forgetful of her years and rank, and regardless of all social prejudices and personal fears, has quitted the deep privacy and the luxurious ease of a Mahomedan Zenana to make her way, amid strangers, to a strange country, adventuring a voyage across the great waters—the tremendous import of which, in the eyes of an Indian Princess, it is scarcely possible for a European to conceive—to battle for justice with a nation of unbelievers, there would be something in the circumstances of this petition to evoke the sympathies of a generous people. It is impossible not to commiserate the petitioners, and the more so since commiseration is the only solace they are likely to have in their misfortunes. The House of Commons may take the premises of the petition into its "full consideration," but the "redress of the grievances therein complained of" is impossible.

The premises are, that the native Princes of OUDE were unrighteously despoiled of their possessions—the redress of their grievance would be their restoration to dominion. Even assuming the premises to be fully established, and that the East India Company and her Majesty's Government stand convicted of the offence of unjustly and unlawfully usurping the Sovereignty of OUDE, they still cannot undo the wrong. It was a saying of the great Lord CLIVE, with reference to the position of the English in India, that "to stand still is danger—to recede is ruin." *Nulla vestigia retrorsum* is the fitting motto of our Empire in the East. It is unquestionably one of the evils—the greatest, perhaps—of our position, that, whether right or wrong in what we do, we cannot safely make restitution. The political authority of our Government in India could not long survive the reversal of its decrees. We may illustrate this by reference to a matter of no small interest at the present time, in connexion with the most important Indian question of the day—the disaffection of the Sepoy army. It is said, by men of knowledge and experience, that one of the chief causes of the relaxed discipline which has led to such terrible results is that the European officers have no real power and authority in their regiments. The decisions of commanding officers are often over-ruled and reversed by the higher powers—the tendency of the present system being to humiliate those who ought to be elevated in the eyes of the Sepoys. A remarkable instance of this recently occurred in a cavalry regiment. The commanding officer had reduced to the ranks a havildar, or native sergeant. The act of authority may have been just or unjust, legal or illegal. We do not know the merits of the particular case—we have only to do with the results. The decision of the highest regimental authority was disapproved and reversed at Head-quarters. The commanding officer was compelled to restore the broken havildar to his lost rank, and to do this openly on parade, replacing with his own hands the stripes on the man's arm. Of course the regiment in which this occurred is one of those which has been in overt mutiny. The story is so incredible that, if it were not for the high authority from which we have derived it, we should discard all idea of its authenticity. We may speak of the matter, on another occasion, in its military bearings. We refer to it now merely as an illustration of the political danger of such a process of restitution applied to kingdoms instead of to individuals. If the Government of India is to be compelled by a higher power to restore the stripes to the arms of reduced Princes, how long can we expect the authority of that Government to survive the humiliation?

But the premises are not established—far from it. The OUDE petition has, indeed, been drawn up with some lawyer-like adroitness, and there is no doubt that it hits a blot. The statement is, that the King of OUDE was violently deposed in defiance of a treaty executed in 1837, which prescribed, as a remedy for the misgovernment of the country, a system of administration by the agency of European officers deriving their authority from, and acting on behalf of, the King. It is said that England was bound to try the effects of this system before resorting to the extreme measure of absorbing the territories and appropriating the revenues of the kingdom. The answer to this is that the

treaty of 1837 was disallowed by the Home Government—that is, by the conjoint authority of the Court of Directors and the Board of Control. On the other hand, there is a prompt rejoinder, to the effect that the disallowance of the treaty was never communicated to the Oude Government, and that the treaty itself was included in a collection of engagements with the native princes of India not long since laid before Parliament. Now, we cannot help thinking it a suspicious circumstance in connexion with the line adopted by Sir FITZROY KELLY, that he has never moved for the production of papers relating to this treaty of 1837. If a knowledge of the real facts of the case will convince Parliament and the public of the wrong done to his clients, why not make the facts known? It is not sufficient that they should constitute the allegations of the petition. The Government of India is emphatically a Government of record. Everything relating to this alleged treaty of 1837 is doubtless on record, and could, we presume, be produced in a few days. At present, the legitimate presumption is that, as those who have searched the documents and read all the papers relating to that treaty (see Lord DALHOUSIE'S minute of June 18, 1855) are of opinion that the only engagement in force at the time of our assuming the government of Oude was the treaty of 1801, the later instrument was really invalid. The fact of its appearance in the collection of treaties referred to is no proof of its validity. That collection was not, as we have seen it asserted by the advocates of the King of Oude, made at the India House and signed by one of the officers of the Court, but made in India and signed by an under-secretary, who inadvertently included it in the collection. The Oude petitioners assert that, during the period of eighteen years which have elapsed since the execution of the treaty, "every English official and every sovereign of Oude have alike regarded the said treaty as existing and valid." But Sir FITZROY KELLY is doubtless aware that its existence was officially ignored in 1838. This, at least, is upon record in Parliamentary papers bearing date the 17th of July in that year. But it is not upon record that, when the British Resident announced to the King of Oude the intention of his Government to assume the administration of the country in consequence of the previous violation of the treaty of 1801, WAJID ALI said one word about the treaty of 1837.

We repeat, then, let us learn the facts of the case, and, having learnt them, let us examine their legal and constitutional bearings. History will be the gainer by the process, though the royal family of Oude cannot be benefited by it, whatever may be ascertained by the inquiry. For even if the Special Committee prayed for were granted, and if that Committee were to report that the Sovereigns of Oude were unjustly deprived of their dominions, there is not the remotest probability of WAJID ALI being restored to the throne of his fathers. The East India Company and the Government of Lord PALMERSTON—for they are not to be separated in this matter—might be condemned; but Oude would still be a British province. Sir FITZROY KELLY, we may be sure, has never seriously contemplated any other result.

One word more of a practical character in conclusion. If the members of the royal family of Oude have one real and disinterested friend, he should counsel them to bring their case to an issue with the least possible delay. At their present rate of progress, it will take many years—at their present rate of expenditure, it will take many millions sterling—to bring about a settlement of the matters in which they are so deeply interested. They have now been nearly a year amongst us, and—apart from some indifferent pamphlets which have done more injury than benefit to their cause—they have accomplished nothing but the incubation of the petition before us, which an able lawyer might easily have read up for and prepared in a week, and which could have been done for them quite as effectually, and quite as economically, in Calcutta as in London. But we hear of new European agents arriving from India, and new advocates employed in Parliament; and there is every prospect, therefore, of the unfortunate Princes of Oude being reduced to a chronic state of litigation. It may have been cruel and rapacious to deprive them of the privilege of misgoverning their people; but it is still more cruel to buoy them up with false hopes of recovering it, and still more rapacious to extract from them extravagant largesses for services which can only have the effect of protracting the sufferings of the Royal exiles. At all events, let the poor old Begum go back to her home. If the gentlemen of the party desire to

see a little more of the great country which has subjugated well nigh all the nationalities of India, let them follow their inclinations—they may gather some useful knowledge, and acquire some manly habits to carry back to the East. But the unfortunate old lady, cooped up in the comfortless apartments of Harley House, can gain nothing but the experience of sorrow. She has had a two minutes' interview with Queen VICTORIA, and we do not know what more she can do. Let her, then, rely on the liberality of the East India Company—who, judging by their last-published despatch on the affairs of Oude, are not unwilling to make a separate provision for her—and at once prepare to return to India, where, surrounded by all the comforts and luxuries to which she has been accustomed from her birth, she will look back upon her residence in England as upon an ugly dream.

THE PROBATE AND ADMINISTRATION BILL.

THERE is a fate which dogs the steps of all who are bold enough to attempt the reform of the Ecclesiastical Courts. For thirty years every bill introduced for the purpose has broken down. The strange part of the phenomenon is that everybody, without exception, is agreed upon the absolute necessity of a change, and that the substitution of a single efficient Court, or group of connected Courts, for the four hundred distinct tribunals which now exercise testamentary jurisdiction, is admitted on all hands to be the one essential feature of any reform. Whatever differences of opinion exist on minor details, there has never been any serious question as to the principle on which legislation in this matter should be based. And yet, in spite of this real unanimity, it is undeniable that it requires greater strength in the Government, and more tact in the advocate, to carry a bill for the abolition of a jurisdiction which is an admitted nuisance, than would be necessary to procure the assent of the House of Commons to the commencement of a new war, the waste of the public revenue, or the indefinite postponement of the liberal policy on which the country is bent. The debate of Monday night has furnished one more illustration of this curious fact. The Probate and Administration Bill, like all its numerous predecessors, has come to grief; and if we are to believe the solemn asseverations of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, the vote by which the Government has been defeated will, if carried into effect, render the whole bill useless. We have striven in vain to comprehend why the modification of the original measure which the House of Commons has insisted on should be attended by such fatal results; but perhaps our readers will be more successful in guessing the source of the unfeigned alarm with which the supporters of the measure are evidently inspired.

After all the discussions which have taken place on this uninviting topic, most persons are probably so far initiated into the mysteries of ecclesiastical procedure as to know the difference between common form and solemn form business. The substantial distinction is, that the former is a mere *ex-parte* authentication of a will, and is the mode of procedure in the large majority of cases; while the proof of a will in solemn form involves the citation of all persons interested in disputing it, and is resorted to for the purpose of settling, once for all, the validity of a will with respect to which a contest is anticipated. As the Government Bill originally stood, it was proposed to give to District Registrars, scattered over the country, jurisdiction to grant probates in common form only of wills which did not pass property of greater value than 1500*l*. All other wills were to come to London for probate. Two successive votes decided—first by a majority of thirty-one, and afterwards by a majority of only two against the Government—that no pecuniary limit should be imposed on the authority of the local officers; and it is this defeat which the ATTORNEY-GENERAL has declared to be fatal to his Bill. It strikes us as a matter of considerable indifference whether the Bill be passed in the one shape or in the other; and certainly there is nothing in the arguments on either side to excite much enthusiasm either for or against the amendment. We have very little sympathy with the parish-vestry policy which puts local interests in antagonism to the general convenience of the country; but we are equally unconvinced by the reasoning of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, who maintained with extraordinary fervour the startling proposition that, although local Registrars would be quite competent to authenticate wills under 1500*l*, no title would be secure if they were trusted to decide on the regularity of

the execution of a rich man's will. The ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S argument was, that great skill and vigilance were necessary to guard against the grant of improper probates—that the local officers who were to be appointed could not be trusted to exercise due care in the examination of the documents propounded as wills—and that, therefore, their blundering should be exclusively practised on estates of less than 1500*l.* The old Diocesan officers, it seems, occasionally granted probates of obliterated wills without the smallest inquiry, and the possibility of such flagrant neglect was duly urged as a ground for preferring a central to a system of local jurisdictions. Unquestionably, if the new Registrars are to conduct their business after such a fashion as this, they will be unfit to have control, not only of wills over 1500*l.*, but of any wills at all; and unless the illustration is, as we should hope, altogether impertinent, it establishes the absolute necessity of abolishing local jurisdictions altogether. But really we do not see why a rural residence should render a well-paid officer incapable of looking at the documents which he is asked to certify; and unless there is to be some curious principle in the selection of local Registrars, it would seem to be quite possible to secure a careful scrutiny of a rich man's will no less than of a poor man's.

But having made up his mind that the country Registrars were, as a rule, likely to pass imperfect wills, the ATTORNEY-GENERAL proceeded to dilate on the frightful consequences which would ensue—always, of course, to estates over 1500*l.* “If an executor were appointed to take possession, and it were afterwards found that probate had been improperly granted, those persons who might have paid money under its operation would have to pay it over again.” If every error in the grant of probate is to be visited on innocent persons who may make payments to the executor designated by a competent Court, there is certainly reason enough to be careful whether the will relate to property of large or small amount; but we are glad to discover that the terrible risk with which the ATTORNEY-GENERAL threatens every one, from the Bank of England downwards, is only a *brutum fulmen* after all. Sir RICHARD BETHELL means to treat us better than he promises, for he has kindly inserted in the 70th clause of his Bill a provision that all payments *bonâ fide* made to an executor acting under a probate afterwards revoked shall be a legal discharge to the person making the same. We may therefore console ourselves with the reflection that the dangers which the increase of the local jurisdiction was to cause will only encompass us in the event of Ministers suffering another defeat when they come to the consideration of the 70th clause. But what are we to think of the Government case, when it is considered necessary to frighten the House into compliance by such imaginary terrors as the ATTORNEY-GENERAL thought fit to conjure up?

The whole question between a local and a central system really lies in a nutshell. There is some additional convenience afforded by local Courts, but it is clear that no consideration of this kind can justify the appointment of incompetent officers to exercise jurisdiction to any amount at all. If it is possible to obtain reasonable security, there is no pretence for confining the powers of country Registrars to property of any specific amount. If we cannot get mere routine business performed with proper care out of the metropolis, it is impossible to defend the proposal to hand over all wills where the property is of less value than 1500*l.*—i.e., nearly four-fifths of all the wills that are made—to incompetent local functionaries. This is so obvious that one is tempted to look beyond the ostensible reasons presented to the House of Commons for the true cause of the tenacity with which the ATTORNEY-GENERAL hugs his arbitrary limit of 1500*l.* Can it be that the explanation of this, as of all the other difficulties which surround the subject, is to be sought in vested interests and compensation clauses? Certainly, the localization of the business arising out of important wills will go far to derange the balance which had been so ingeniously struck between the claims of existing officers and the requirements of public convenience. The Bill, as originally framed, was a clever system of counterpoise. Scarcely a single official existence was to be extinguished; and, with the exception of a dozen or so of proctors in York and Chester, all the present judges, registrars, and other officers were to be absorbed in the new system, and almost the only compensation to be granted would have been for the vested interests of the Messrs. MOORE and Viscount CANTERBURY in their respective sinecures. Any change in the 1500*l.* compromise threatens to destroy the equilibrium

of the scheme. If local Registrars were abolished altogether, all the functionaries in the Diocesan Courts would look for compensation. If the jurisdiction over the large estates is not secured for London, the proctors of Doctors' Commons will not give up their business without a sturdy fight for an equivalent, which may very likely end this year, as it has done before, in the rejection of the entire measure. This is the only point of view in which we can discover anything fatal in the vote which has created so much consternation. The question itself seems to us a comparatively insignificant matter, and it will be anything but creditable to Parliament if it allows the interests of country solicitors or London proctors to defeat a measure which, whatever may be its defects, has at least the merit of abolishing the clumsiest and most costly jurisdiction in the country.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO M'HALE.

THE decisions of the Election Committees of the House of Commons are this year, from various causes, watched with unusual eagerness; but in these strange inquiries there is always something of that natural interest of human curiosity, with which we are apt to poke into any grotesque proceeding which is not exactly our own business. Besides this piquancy peculiar to meddling with other people's affairs, there is, in election committees, the special attraction of the little kitchen style of anecdote, the dirty gossiping personalities, the glimpses of inner life and character, the small talk, pot-house annals, and scandal, the coarseness and knavishness, the irrelevant particulars, and the rich unctuous details of coarseness and vulgarity, in which Parliamentary Committees and Nisi Prius trials beat even the style of literature which, in this country, is connected chiefly with the name of Mr. G. W. REYNOLDS.

First in interest among these investigations is the Mayo inquiry. Here is a picture of Ireland at work, and a curious transitional epoch it presents. The lion of the tribe of Judah prowls threateningly round his ancient domain; and the sheep, scared and trembling, cower in every fold. But the forest does not submit as it once did. Archbishop M'HALE thunders as of old from St. Jarlath's, but “all the Roman Catholic proprietors of Mayo, with two exceptions, voted for Colonel HIGGINS.” This is one element in the future of Ireland, and it is significant. To the credit of the great Roman Catholic body, they show, not only no sympathy, but marked disgust at the conduct of a portion of the priesthood in the Western elections. But it is scarcely to be hoped that Dr. M'HALE and his clergy will read the signs of the times—it is premature to expect this of the ecclesiastical temper, especially of its remarkable Hibernian variety. And so they go on in the old way. We are bound to acknowledge that on the whole the late Mayo election has had its precedents. The Six Mile Cross affair was a bloodier business; and probably the Rev. Mr. CONWAY only represents and repeats a class. We have met the like of him before in the social annals of Ireland. Dr. M'HALE has his doubts about the possibility of “denunciation from the altar,” but when we hear of the invocation of God's curse upon all who should vote against their country and for Colonel HIGGINS, we are led to recall the old familiar common form. The whole affair is stereotyped in our memory. Personal familiarity, too, has not unpleasantly revived old recollections. The inquiring mind has had ample opportunities during the last week for psychological study in that curious museum of men—the gallery of the Committee-rooms of the House of Commons. The old hedge-priest—whom the improved state of Maynooth has done so much to render impossible for the future—is not yet consigned to the strata in which is embedded his congener, the great Irish elk. It is not often that a specimen of this abnormal variety of the *genus homo* is to be found in the ordinary haunts of mankind; but whole crowds of them were to be seen during the Mayo inquiry mingling with men, *ὅσοι σὺν Ἰσπορί εἶσι*. There they were, sleek, unctuous, and unwashed—just the thing that the story-books tell us of. Both speech and face bewray them. What they are we know—what their manner of life and conversation is, there is positively no need of evidence to show. Look at one of these gentlemen, and his whole life and pastoral experiences are before us as in a map. There is the gallant arm that double-thongs the flock into political and spiritual obedience—can it be the very “Mr. RILEY, the curate of the town,” whom CURRAN'S son, so he assures us, saw “striking

and cruelly flogging a number of people with a thick cane?" Take a note of that jolly, flushy, fleshy face—surely it belongs to one of "the two clergymen between whom" PHELM BARNAN, the reluctant voter, "was helped up when he had taken an inch of liquor more than his due, when he sat quiet enough, because the two clergymen were singing and rowing for themselves." Or look at yonder holy veteran—can it be that precious comforter of the afflicted who whispered into his penitent's ear "that his soul would be in hell if he voted for HIGGINS"? Are we actually, here in Westminster Hall, in the presence of that meek and religious spirit, "the Rev. LUKE RYAN, administrator of a Bishop's parish, who," in preaching the gospel of peace, observed, "If the Devil himself came up the church I would sooner vote for him than for HIGGINS?"

It is, of course, something to have seen the men who are the heroes of Irish history; but it is more to have listened to the apologist of this system. We do not class Archbishop M'HALE with his clergy. He is evidently made of different metal; and his examination bears witness to considerable abilities, and to that natural quickness and intelligence which something like half a century of experience has matured into a very valuable specimen of the Roman Catholic dignitary. Not only is the ARCHBISHOP a first-rate witness, but he presented the whole case to the Committee in the most plausible manner. If his clergy had done what they were said to have done, he was ready with canonical censures; but as to his judgment on what they were proved to have done, he had nothing to say. Besides, he was invested with judicial authority; and an extra-judicial, still less a pre-judicial, opinion was not to be expected of him. The case of the inculpated priests might come before him in another form, and so the Committee must excuse him. As to the alleged interference of the clergy in the chapels, "it has not come to his Grace's knowledge as Archbishop—not in his official capacity." "It has not been sanctioned." For himself, he merely claims the common rights of citizenship. To be sure, he is an Archbishop, yet "not the great Archbishop of the West, nor even a great Archbishop," but only a poor priest. Still he has "a right, nay, a duty, to express his sentiments as to the merits or demerits of the candidates for Mayo." Yes, and not only to express the archiepiscopal sentiments, but to do something else. Not, of course, to coerce those over whom he has influence—anything but this; because in the case of the landed proprietors, "to coerce the tenantry to vote for a particular candidate, is to act in defiance of the constitution." Here is the distinction:—"The consciences of the peasantry should be in the keeping of the ministers of religion. The landlords have no right to exercise a control over the consciences of their tenantry. Their consciences should be left to themselves, to their God, and to the priests." But as there is no open vision—as the relative pretensions of HIGGINS and MOORE are not a matter of direct revelation—practically, the threefold influence is reduced to a single element. The conscience of the Irish peasantry is to be left to the priests.

If so, one of two things must follow from the Mayo commentary upon the M'HALE gospel—either we must have a new Irish Reform Bill, or we must get rid of our Corrupt Practices Act. There is an absurd inconsistency somewhere. Side by side with the Mayo Committee last week sat the Maidstone Committee, in which some tradesman was proved to have dismissed a workman—not because he voted in a certain way, for, long after his vote, which was against his master's politics, he retained his employment—but because he said something in his evidence before the Committee which the employer did not like; and so, as he said, he "got the sack." Hereupon the Committee bounced out, and, not unreasonably, vindicated its own dignity. A man was not to be coerced, even after an election, in this way—political freedom, *ex post facto*, must be sustained. In Mayo, however, it is announced that political freedom is to become extinct. A landlord's hints are, as Dr. M'HALE observes, "unconstitutional." To insist that your tenant should vote according to your conscience, is "to violate the freedom of election;" but "the consciences of the peasantry should be in the keeping of the ministers of religion." This is further explained as follows:—"The exercise of a political right, such as that of voting, is a matter of conscience, about which a peasant is likely to feel doubts and scruples—a doubtful or ignorant conscience, be it that of Protestant, Roman Catholic, or any other, naturally seeks an adviser—to recur to such an adviser is an exercise of free will, from which

no man ought to be debarred—and the proper adviser is the clergyman. How he "advises," to be sure, we all know; but still, to consult the clergyman is a free exercise of the voter's judgment.

Be it so—we are not going to find fault with all this logic. The whole thing hangs together; but if we are not to say that this is "undue influence" under the Corrupt Practices Act, we must think perhaps of another kind of Reform Bill. Somehow or other, this sort of thing will not do. The constitution will not work under it. Even Ireland revolts at this. The Roman Catholic proprietors—who, as we have said, almost to a man, voted for Colonel HIGGINS—cannot go on with this sort of gospel at work. It is in Ireland as in Belgium—the Ultramontane clergy are precipitating matters. They are alienating from themselves the property, intelligence, and education of the country. They are more and more identifying themselves with the peasantry and their consciences—consciencies which require the extremely stimulating treatment of blasphemy, damnation, and curses by way of mild counter-irritants, whose chosen physician is Father CONWAY, whose discipline is riot and drunkenness, and whose spiritual arms are bludgeons, brickbats, and a musket behind a hedge. We are obliged to Dr. M'HALE—he has given us the theory of the thing, not offensively, but with calmness of manner and very refined precision of language. It is quite plain that it is a system, and means something. We have here, not the mere fanaticism and violence of a single ignorant Irish curate, but a deliberate, formal, solemn, serious view of duty. It is intelligible, because the ARCHBISHOP is a candid and intelligent person. We have at once text and commentary, and we are thankful for it. And the more we know of it the better—the more Ireland knows of it the better. The thing only wants to be known. With these fruits we know what must be the end of the tree; and as it is doomed, we note with satisfaction that the intelligent and respectable Roman Catholic laity are doing their best to precipitate its fall.

NOT PROVEN.

THOSE who have watched the evidence in the case of Madeleine Smith cannot be surprised or dissatisfied at the result of the trial. The verdict of the jury must, we think, have been anticipated by every one who has any adequate conception of the degree of certainty required by the law as to the guilt of an accused person, before he can be made answerable for the crimes which he may have committed. We have elsewhere remarked upon the moral features of a case which, even in these days of *causes célèbres*, stands alone in the unspeakable horror and atrocity of its circumstances; but the evidence is so voluminous and so curious that its bearings appear to us to be worthy of an independent examination.

The facts proved on the part of the prosecution were as follows. In the early part of 1855, one Emile L'Angelier, a clerk in the employment of Messrs. Huggins and Co., of Glasgow, was introduced, in compliance with his own solicitations, by a lad of the name of Baird, to Miss Madeleine Smith, a young lady then about nineteen years of age, and the daughter of an eminent architect in the same city. The introduction was made in the street by a mere lad, after grown-up persons had refused to sanction it, so that the acquaintance appears to have originated in an improper and clandestine manner. It ripened, however, so fast into intimacy that as early as the 30th of April, 1855, the lady wrote to L'Angelier by his Christian name, wishing, amongst other things, that she could take walks with him. Several other letters followed, in one of which, on the 3rd December, 1855, Miss Smith addressed her lover as "My own darling Husband," and all of them are written in language of the strongest passion. This state of feeling appears to have lasted till near the end of 1856; and expressions occur in some of the letters written in the spring of that year, which leave no doubt of the fact that L'Angelier seduced the woman who has just been tried for his murder. In the December of 1856 the correspondence changes in character, and bears traces of the fact that L'Angelier had begun to feel jealous of the manner in which Miss Smith received the advances of a gentleman—Mr. Minnoch—who afterwards made her an offer of marriage. Up to the 23rd of January, the letters display a mixture of fondness and jealousy. On the 28th, Mr. Minnoch made an offer of marriage to Miss Smith, and was accepted; and somewhere about the end of the month, though the date is not precisely fixed, L'Angelier appears to have had the first of four attacks of illness, the last of which ended fatally. The doctor who treated him on one of these occasions looked upon his disease at the time as being a bilious fever, though he afterwards said that, if he had heard that he had been taking an irritant poison, he should have attributed the symptoms to that cause. Neither in the letters written during the month of January nor elsewhere do we find clear evidence that there was any interview between the prisoner and the deceased at this time.

A servant, Christina McKenzie, speaks vaguely of one meeting to which she was privy, and the letters refer to conversations, which may, however, have taken place at the window. Early in February—that is, soon after her engagement with Mr. Minnoch—the prisoner wrote to the deceased asking for the return of her letters, and putting an end to the engagement between them, “owing to coolness and indifference (nothing else);” and she goes on to say, “for some time back you must have noticed a coolness in my notes. My love for you has ceased, and that is why I was cool.” L’Angelier seems to have refused to return the letters, whereupon the prisoner wrote two more, begging him in the most heart-rending tone not to expose her, and admitting that she had used him ill in affecting love which she had ceased to feel, but still concealing the fact of her engagement to Mr. Minnoch. We never remember to have seen, either in real life or in fiction, anything more horrible than the picture of agony which these letters show. No language can describe the baseness of the man who refused to be moved by them.

On the 14th of February, the prisoner wrote a calmer and shorter note, asking for the return of “all my cool letters—the last four I have written.” After that day she wrote another letter of which the date is not ascertained, further than that it was written before the 26th. It contains the expression, “You did look bad on Sunday night and Monday morning,” and says that “there is something in the air;” that she herself is unwell, but that she is “taking some stuff to bring back the colour.” About the middle of this week L’Angelier had another attack of illness; but though it was argued for the prosecution that this was on the night of the 19th (Thursday), and that the deceased and the prisoner met on the evening of that day, the evidence in favour of each of these propositions seems to us unsatisfactory—indeed, it would not have been admitted at all in an English court. It consists merely of the statement of a Miss Perry that the deceased told her, on the 17th of February, that he was to see Miss Smith on the 19th, and that on the 2nd of March “He said, as far as I can recollect,” that his illness “happened on the night of the 19th.” He told several persons that on his return to his lodgings that night he fell on the ground, was very ill, and thought he should have died.

Up to this time no poison is shown to have been procured by the prisoner. Her father’s page, indeed, stated that she had sent him out for a small phial of prussic acid “for her hands,” which he was not able to get; but he could not fix the time within a month, nor could the doctor to whose shop he went. On the 21st of February, however, she did indisputably buy sixpenny-worth of arsenic; but she bought it at a shop where she was well known, and had it charged to her father’s account. On the 22nd, L’Angelier had another violent attack of illness and vomiting, consistent with, but not conclusively proving, the administration of an irritant poison. The Lord Advocate contended that the prisoner and the deceased met on the night of the 22nd (Sunday); and it was suggested that a dose of arsenic was administered on that occasion. The evidence upon this head appears to us extremely weak. It is that, up to the 14th, there had been no meeting—that there had been one before the undated letter was written—and that it took place by the connivance of the servant, during which the prisoner and the deceased were alone together for half an hour. He inferred from the expression about the looks of the deceased on “Sunday and Monday,” that the interview last mentioned must have taken place on the night of Sunday, the 22nd—the day after the purchase of the poison, and the day before the illness of the deceased; and of course, if that were so, the fact would weigh most heavily against the prisoner. We think, however, that this argument overlooks a most essential point. According to the theory for the prosecution, there had been an interview on Thursday, the 19th; and why might not this have been the one to which Mrs. McKenzie’s evidence applied? If the interview to which she was a party did take place on a Sunday night, it is singular that the fact should have escaped her memory. If it took place on the 19th, there is no evidence whatever to show any interview on the 22nd, except the undated letter, which is consistent with an interview at the window. No doubt if we were to speculate on the subject, we might incline to the view taken by the Lord Advocate; but the issue is too weighty for conjecture, and we cannot think the evidence conclusive.

There is a letter on the 3rd March, written in an affectionate tone, and implying that a reconciliation had taken place, without any explanation of the real state of Miss Smith’s relations with Minnoch. This is followed by a very remarkable one on the 4th, in which the prisoner urges the deceased to take a tour for his health in the Isle of Wight. L’Angelier answered this on the 5th, in a tone of considerable vexation, complaining of the continued attentions of Minnoch, asking, “What is your object in wishing me to go so very far south?” and insisting on an answer to the question, whether she was “directly or indirectly engaged to Mr. Minnoch?” On the next day, she bought another sixpenny-worth of arsenic; but she did so on this occasion with the greatest openness, being accompanied by a young lady who had been her schoolfellow. She said she wanted it for rats, and signed the register in her own name. Indeed, she was known at the shop. The same day she went with her father and mother to the Bridge of Allan, and remained there till the 16th or 17th. There is nothing to show that she expected to meet the deceased there—indeed, from her suggestion about the Isle of Wight, she

obviously wished to avoid him. It does not therefore seem very probable that she would have chosen that particular day for the purchase of arsenic, if she had intended to kill the deceased with it. Whilst at the Bridge of Allan, a day was fixed for the marriage with Minnoch; and on the very next day she wrote to L’Angelier, anticipating “a dear sweet interview” on her return in the early part of the next week. She returned to Glasgow on the 17th (Tuesday), and on the 18th, she bought a third sixpenny-worth of arsenic, with the same openness as before. On the 20th (the post-mark is the 21st), she wrote again to her lover, asking him to come “to-morrow night”—which would be Saturday. This letter was addressed to his lodgings, but in the mean time he had gone to Edinburgh, and thence to the Bridge of Allan, where he received this last letter. In a letter dated 5th March, he had said, “the doctor tells me I must go to the Bridge of Allan;” but there is no evidence to show that the prisoner knew that he had gone there. He returned to Glasgow at once on the receipt of the letter, reached his lodgings at about 8 P.M., went out at 9, asking for the latch-key, as he expected to be out late, and returned between 2 and 3 A.M., struck with the illness of which he died in the course of the morning. Two persons saw him between 9 and 10, not very far from the prisoner’s house. After his death, 80 or 90 grains of arsenic were found in his stomach, and the opinion of the medical witnesses was that he must have swallowed at least 200.

This was the case for the prosecution, and certainly few cases could present circumstances of graver suspicion. The prisoner said she used the arsenic as a cosmetic, and that she had heard of its being so employed when she was at school some years before; but it seems hardly credible that it should have occurred to her to make that use of it for the first time (for there was no evidence of her having ever bought it before) just when she had succeeded in coaxing her lover into a hollow reconciliation, and for the third time just after she had fixed the day for her marriage with his rival. Besides this, there is no explanation whatever of her attempt to purchase prussic acid. It may be an English prejudice which induces us to attach little weight to L’Angelier’s declarations to Miss Perry and to Mrs. Towers about the coffee and cocoa which he had taken, and which had disagreed with him. Statements in conversation are made so rashly and recollected so vaguely, that we doubt whether it is not better in matters of importance to leave them out of account, as is done in our own Courts. But apart from this—and from much other matter which, though given in evidence, appears to us but distantly connected with the question at issue—the coincidence of the purchase of the poison with the illnesses, and ultimately with the death of the deceased, the close connexion in point of time between these occurrences, the crises in the relations between Miss Smith and L’Angelier, and the absence of any explanation of the attempt to purchase the prussic acid, do certainly produce a suspicion, as strong as any that can fall short of absolute proof, that the prisoner murdered her lover.

We do not think, however, that it can be questioned that the prosecution failed to produce absolutely decisive proof of Madeleine Smith’s guilt, to the exclusion of all reasonable doubt. The prisoner was charged with attempts to murder on the 19th and on the 22nd of February, and with actual murder on the 22nd of March. Now with respect to the first of these occasions, there is no sort of evidence that she possessed any poison at the time. The first known purchase of arsenic was on the 21st of February. The illness of L’Angelier was on the 19th. This not only rebuts the notion that the prisoner poisoned him on that day, but it goes some way to prove that his second illness may have been attributable to natural causes; for if, before the prisoner could have administered arsenic to him, he had so severe a fit of illness as to be on the floor in stupor and deadly sickness all night, it may well be that his attack three days afterwards was of the same kind. As to the illness on the 22nd, we have shown that the evidence is far from supplying conclusive proof of an interview just before it; and there is not a single tittle of evidence to show that, on the night before the man’s death, he saw Miss Smith. What evidence there is—though of course only negative—is the other way. Her sister slept with the prisoner undisturbed, the servants heard nothing, and the prisoner herself denied, in the most positive way, that she had seen or heard of L’Angelier on the Sunday night; whilst she freely admitted having made an appointment for the Saturday, and this at a time when she could not know what evidence there might be against her. But while we do not think that the arguments by which it was attempted to disprove the prisoner’s guilt are more conclusive than those which were adduced to prove it, still some strong observations arise on this side of the question. The prisoner’s declaration was, on the supposition of her guilt, a perfect miracle of audacity and skill. Only one part of it was contradicted—the assertion that L’Angelier had never been in the house at Blythswood-square. The frankness with which the purchase of the arsenic was owned, and the perfect openness with which it was bought, both look like innocence; whilst it was certainly true that, for three weeks before she was questioned, she had not seen her lover—unless, indeed, she saw him the night before his death, which was not proved. It was also true that she had made an appointment with him for the Saturday night; and there is no reason to assume the falsehood of her statement that she did not know that he was at the Bridge of Allan.

Some minor observations are not without importance. The dose of arsenic given was one which it would have been difficult to administer in any liquid; and it would have been very strange if L'Angelier had consented to drink coffee or cocoa given him by her if his suspicions had been already roused, as appears from his conversations to have been the case.

We cannot lay much weight on the evidence by which it was sought to establish the probability of L'Angelier's suicide. That he should have come home from the Bridge of Allan, left his lodgings at 9, taken arsenic and wandered till 3 in the morning, is a very fantastic supposition; and if it is said that he did so after an interview with Miss Smith in which she informed him of her engagement with Minnoch, it is not easy to understand the vehemence with which she denied the interview, nor is it obvious how the thing was done. A man does not, and indeed cannot, poison himself with arsenic in the street. Some vehicle would be almost indispensable for the administration of the poison, and that could easily be procured at his lodgings, whilst it would be most difficult to get it in the middle of a Sunday night at Glasgow without being perceived. The man's language, and his alleged habit of arsenic eating, seem to us matters of little consequence. He was obviously a vain, feeble braggart, whose words went for very little.

On the whole, whichever way we view the matter, if it is impossible to arrive at any conviction about it which has not its drawback, it is as well that things are as they are. The verdict of "Not Proven," though it practically secures impunity, does not preclude the possibility of further inquiry if fresh evidence should be discovered. The evidence, we fear, preponderates in a terrible direction. If the wretched girl is guilty, not only can nothing that is said reach her heart, but, taking the ordinary view of the future sufferings of such a criminal, she herself might have cause to regret that she has exchanged an easy doom for a much more terrible future. They who, influenced more by feeling and sentiment than reason, can yet cherish a hope that she is innocent, will have a satisfaction in reflecting that the world has been spared the commission of a crime which is almost an unparalleled outrage on humanity.

LIGHT LITERATURE AND THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

OUR readers are no doubt aware that a number of persons, more or less well known to the public, are giving a series of entertainments, in order to raise a fund for the family of the late Mr. Jerrold. We were attacked with considerable acrimony by the *Leader* last Saturday for an expression which we had used in a former number in reference to that gentleman, and for the general tone of this journal towards Mr. Dickens and other popular writers. Nothing can be more proper or more amiable than that any profession should contribute to the support of the families of such of its members as may have deserved its esteem and died in poverty, and nothing could be more ungracious than to attempt to interfere with so laudable a purpose. It does not follow, however, that whenever a celebrated man dies he is to be indiscriminately eulogized, or that every appeal to the public in behalf of his family is to be allowed to pass unchallenged. When, for a series of years, a man has been notoriously in receipt of a large income, some explanation might not unreasonably be afforded of the circumstances which render it necessary to ask for money for his survivors; for there is all the difference in the world between assisting in a work of charity and subscribing to a testimonial. It may be as necessary to combat the one as it would be unfeeling to hinder the other. It would surely be a monstrous proposition that the mere fact of a man's death is to give unlimited currency to the eulogies of his admirers, and to close the lips of those who are of another way of thinking. When the Emperor Nicholas was laid in his grave, a well-known writer did not hesitate to record a conviction that he was "the right man in the right place." Will Mr. Jerrold's admirers maintain that such a remark was of necessity brutal? Strongly as we claim the right of criticising even those who are recently dead, if their friends gratuitously challenge public applause in their behalf, we felt that, as there was in this case a possibility of doing an injury to Mr. Jerrold's surviving relations, it was better to assume that the testimonial to him was of a charitable character, and to pass over the matter in silence; but we did not feel bound to abstain from an incidental allusion to his name when it lay full in our way. Speaking of the characteristics of a class of journalists now rapidly passing away, we observed that Mr. Jerrold was rather a favourable specimen of them, and that they were "often men of great natural talent, of some acquired literary skill, and honest enough in their detestation of our 'existing institutions,' but utterly uneducated and hopelessly perverse." In order to accuse us, with the greater convenience, of "tilting at a new-made grave," the *Leader* suppresses the rest of the passage, and prints only the words which we have italicised as being a substantive description by us of Mr. Jerrold's character. This, we are further informed, is "a sneer." Surely, it is a very odd one. It is the statement of a fact which we challenge our contemporary to deny. Can he say that Mr. Jerrold was not ignorant, or can he deny that he looked on society with a perverse and a jaundiced spirit? Even his eulogist in the *Times* was obliged to introduce into his praises an avowal that in private life he was a more amiable man than his readers would have supposed him to be; and his biography was

principally remarkable for the fact that he raised himself from a very low rank in life. That this was honourable to his talent and energy, no one can deny; but surely, as far as it goes, it confirms the impression which his writings convey, that he was "utterly uneducated."

We do not, however, intend to enter into a discussion on Mr. Jerrold's character. We frequently expressed our opinion of him in his lifetime, and we have nothing to retract or qualify in what we then said; but as a celebration of his virtues is made the occasion of a sort of field-day on the part of a clique of which he was a distinguished member, and as we have been charged with much unkind and ungenerous conduct towards it, we are not unwilling to take this opportunity of stating, as clearly as we can, our position in reference to the gentlemen in question.

We are spared some trouble in the delicate task of characterising our own position by the vigorous wit of Mr. Jerrold, quoted by his eulogist. "Dogmatism," said that eminent sage, "is puppyism come to maturity;" and the *Leader* adds that such is the spirit which pervades our columns. Mr. Jerrold's extensive knowledge and unperverted spirit no doubt gave peculiar weight to his sayings; and we must therefore bow to the authority of our great critic, and not presume to question what we cannot understand. The accusations directed against us by the *Leader* itself are more intelligible and less afflicting. They consist partly of personalities about "academic breasts" and "united brethren." Whether the writers of this journal are so fortunate as to be on good terms with each other, and to have enjoyed the benefit of a University education, are questions which may be of some importance to themselves, but can have little interest for the public. It is, however, a little singular to find ourselves denounced for a want of literary orthodoxy by a paper which is so very liberal as the *Leader* upon even more serious subjects. If we are "desperate iconoclasts" for attacking "literary men," if we "tilt blindly against the sturdiest living celebrities," if we have a "Quixotic zeal" against "all popular literature," we should have expected some sympathy from writers who tilt so freely against that long-established institution, the Church of England—whose zeal about a well-known work called the Bible some people may consider Quixotic—and who refuse to that very popular writer, Paul of Tarsus, an immunity from criticism which they claim so jealously for Mr. Dickens. We admire and advocate freedom of thought and expression. Let the *Leader* say what it pleases on politics, morals, and theology, but let it concede a similar liberty to us upon the subject of the merits of a small school of *littérateurs*. In his zeal for his venerable institutions, our critic is carried a little beyond the limits of truth. After taunting us with our want of faith, he gives us credit for displaying in our writings "rudiments of a more positive faith." Having "decided over" our "port and olives" that Shakespeare is "overrated," we "reserve," it appears, our "honest but severely temperate enthusiasm for the gentle Erlam and the brave McDonald, who, after the fashion of their order, loved not wisely, but too well;" and we think that the fame of Mr. Thomas Sayers and the Tipton Slasher dwarfs the reputation of Mr. Dickens and Mr. Jerrold. But all that we said about Messrs. Erlam and McDonald was, that the ladies for whose charms they paid so dearly seemed hardly to stand in need of the protection of the law; and we never did Messrs. Sayers and Perry the injustice of comparing them to Mr. Dickens. Our charge against that gentleman is, that he makes himself a legislator and philosopher because he is an amusing writer. Messrs. Sayer and Perry would have only followed his example if, from confidence in their "peristaltic energies" and their impenetrable "conks," they had offered their services to the Government for the suppression of the Indian mutiny. This is so far from being the case that Mr. Perry, as we understand, aspires to no higher publicity than that of the taproom. Our only object in criticising Mr. Dickens has been to lead him to form an equally just estimate of the vocation for which Nature designed him.

We must not, however, neglect the imputation cast upon us by our contemporary, of a certain heartlessness, an "absence of any very lively faith," and a sort of aristocratic contempt for popular feeling. It is a hard task to please the *Leader*. First we are denounced for want of faith, and then described as "mature puppies" for having too much. First we are blamed for heartless coldness, and then for sympathizing with men who, "after the fashion of their order, loved not wisely, but too well." No doubt people so curiously constituted as to relish the combination of "port and olives" may do strange things. Perhaps, however, it is not immaterial to give a more serious answer to the charge in question. We have a faith, and we have a sympathy for popular feeling, which may perhaps turn out in the long run to be more genuine than the flimsyrodomontades about "progress" and "the Liberal party," which are so common in the mouths of writers whom their worst enemies cannot describe as "reserved" or "severely temperate." We do most earnestly believe that the one nation which has reconciled law, liberty, order, and power, cannot be exhaustively distributed into knaves, fools, and literary men. We feel that whatever defects may disfigure our Government and our law—whatever anomalies in Church and State may delight the hearts of writers who are to society what rats and worms are to a ship's bottom—whatever foul scandals may be raked together for the gratification of those who think that our

civilization is adequately represented by the sewage of the Old Bailey—there is not, and there probably never was, a nation in the world which more truly feared and served God, or more nobly ruled man, than that English nation of which Mr. Dickens and his admirers ridicule and revile all the most important members. Thinking so, we must of course be reserved and cautious. We do not break with the whole past history of England. We do not pique ourselves on being the sons of fools, the grandsons of jobbers, and the great-grandsons of slaves. We believe that the wonderful structure of which the present generation forms a part, has been built up by no common wisdom, by no vulgar skill; and though we recognise in it many defects and many inconveniences which it is most necessary to supply or to remove, our wish to reform and our wish to preserve are functions of each other. That in holding such views, and in combating those who ignorantly oppose reform, or who ignorantly insult the existing state of things, we are in complete sympathy with the deepest popular feeling, we are most entirely persuaded; and it will require something far stronger than the denunciations of the *Leader* to induce us to abandon that conviction.

The view which we take of the school represented by Mr. Dickens and by the late Mr. Jerrold is a plain consequence from the principles that we have laid down. Nothing can be more untrue than to represent the *Saturday Review* as the enemy of popular literature. It is the enemy of the impertinent and unfounded assumptions of a particular clique of popular writers; but that is a very different thing. It is as false to say that we "pooh-pooh" Mr. (we do not think that a man forfeits the ordinary civilities of society by writing books) "Thackeray," as to say that we consider Shakespeare overrated. We certainly did not think that it was very patriotic to lecture in the United States on the weaknesses of English kings, at the very time when England was engaged in a desperate war; but of Mr. Thackeray's genius, and of the general tone of his books, we have uniformly spoken in terms of the very highest praise. It is equally untrue that popular writers or performers, as such, are the object of our attacks. It appears from the article to which we are referring, that Mr. Robson, Mr. Albert Smith, Miss Dolby, and Mr. Weiss took part in a concert given in remembrance of Mr. Jerrold. Did we ever say a word against any one of these persons? We have, on the contrary, the greatest admiration for Mr. Robson's extraordinary talents as a comic actor, and for the great ability, great kindness, and strong good sense which distinguish Mr. Albert Smith. The very highest genius may be displayed by novelists or by actors, and nothing could be more illiberal than to depreciate the value of the less distinguished members of that knot of callings of which the proper object is the amusement of the public. Our quarrel with Mr. Dickens is a very limited one. That he is a man of great talent we freely admit; that there is, in our opinion at least, great epigrammatic force and humorous quaintness in some of his expressions, is conclusively proved by the frequency with which we quote him. We have never denied even Mr. Jerrold's talents; but that which we feel to be little less than a crime is, that because a man has great power of language and a lively fancy, he should consider himself at liberty to lay down the law upon the most important subjects. We wish for nothing better than to show these writers what discredit they do to their own calling. If a novelist cannot rest unless he writes about politics, he says, in effect, that novel writing is beneath him—he excites a suspicion that he is dissatisfied with his calling, and is itching to show that, if he had chosen, he could have made a figure in the more regularly constituted walks of life. The business of professional writers of light literature is to amuse the public, but they seem to shrink from such a conclusion as being unwelcome and degrading. The feeling is perfectly intelligible. There is no harm in being a pastrycook—a man may choose it, because he is fit for it; but if the motive of his choice is a boyish greediness, he will find, when he comes to be an ambitious man, that it does not exactly satisfy his aspirations. If, however, a sensible person were involved in such an occupation, he would show his sense by making the best of it, and devoting all the attention in his power to his ovens and his stew-pans; and if, like the Prince in *The Arabian Nights*, he happened to make his fortune by his cream tarts, he would feel the impropriety of immediately proceeding to assert his native superiority to persons of a higher conventional rank by scarifying the Lord Chief Justice in gilt gingerbread caricatures, or handing down the Prime Minister to infamy in cleverly-devised shapes of *blancmange*. A very little experience would show him that, in the case of persons in his position, an attempt to adopt as a motto *ridentes dicere verum* generally ends in very questionable truth and very sorrowful mirth.

The sort of conclusions in which Mr. Dickens and other writers of his school are landed by the recklessness with which they write, form a curious commentary on the *Leader's* complaint, that we are destitute of "a very lively faith." Mr. Dickens's faith is lively enough, no doubt; but how does the *Leader* like it? It seems, in morals and theology, to consist of a sort of happy-go-lucky notion that everything is all right all round, and that—except a few melodramatic villains who are wanted as foils for the rest—this world is peopled by a number of rather grotesque, but exquisitely-luscious incarnate virtues, and the next by a bery of glorified opera dancers, who have no better occupation than that of petting their earthly con-

geners here and hereafter. How far this is to the taste of our contemporary we do not profess to know, but how does he like Mr. Dickens's politics? "I'm all for law and order, and hurrah for a revolution," said the Rugby boy, who was unlawfully fagged; and Mr. Dickens and his admirer might well respectively adopt the halves of that remarkable sentiment. Mr. Dickens's only tangible complaint against the Circumlocution Office is that it is not conducted on Russian principles; and the *Leader* has "a lively faith" in the virtues of a democracy. Perhaps the sentimental novelist and the faithful journalist are not so far apart, after all. Like most realities, English society and politics are dull enough to dreamers and enthusiasts. The common-place official, whose conduct is strictly tied down by fixed rule—the unpaid magistrate, who is only an ordinary country squire or rich retired tradesman—the lawyer, who never appeals to first principles—the judge, who does not administer poetical justice—are, to such persons, flat, stale, and unprofitable. Those who so cordially despise their country are generally the victims of a sort of political Byronism. Just as a romantic young lady scorns the meek curate and the trim apothecary, and fixes her affections upon some ideal Lara, with raven locks, jewelled turban, and a cynical sneer on his chiselled lips, these gentlemen daintily turn away from circumlocution and precedent to cast a languishing eye upon Russia on the one hand, or the United States on the other. And just as the romantic girl, if her wish were gratified, would find that Lara smoked in bed, swore at dinner, ran away from the bailiffs, and ended at the hulks, so Mr. Dickens would find that his efficient Russian friend's first act would be to bind him hand and foot in red tape, and to sequester him, carefully labelled, and most methodically classified, in some official pigeon-hole, where Esther Summerson might fret her heart out in vain about the Court of Chancery, and Mr. Doyce would have to stifle his virtuous indignation if a Russian circumlocutionist thought fit "not to do it." If, on the other hand, we were to give way to a kindred, though in form, a contradictory enthusiasm, writers of an ardent temperament would perhaps find, in the spectacle of a civil war between the Recorder and the Lord Mayor, excited by the question whether Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones should water Ludgate-hill—or in the vagaries of Hardshells intent upon hanging one set of editors, or in those of Hunkers, who might prefer to tar-and-feather another—materials for reflections upon our civilization which would excuse them from the uncongenial duty of raking the kennel and the cess-pool in order to arrive at a just estimate of the society in which they live.

The *Leader* favours us with a definition of Dogmatism. Will it accept from us a description of "Puppyism come to maturity?" When a mere lad discovers in himself great power of fancy, great humour, great facility of language, and employs them, amongst other things, in melodramatic descriptions of the evils of a real abuse, or in harmlessly exaggerated caricatures of a court of law, we can admire his genius, and forgive or enjoy the liberties which he takes with our understanding. But when the clever youth, developing his powers by constant exercise, becomes beyond all comparison the most popular, and one of the most influential, writers of the day, and when, intoxicated by success, he thinks it his duty to run a tilt at institutions of which he knows nothing, and to claim to be the regenerator, because he is the most distinguished buffoon, of society—when in this he is abetted by a crowd of writers like himself, who think that white paint and a cap and bells are the proper costume for legislators, and that, because a man can make silly women cry, he can dictate the principles of law and government to grown men—such a person and his followers appear to us to afford the strongest of all illustrations of that which Mr. Jerrold considered a synonym for dogmatism.

THE MODERN BRITISH MASTERS AT MANCHESTER.

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, who succeeded West in the Presidential chair of the Royal Academy, and who is best known for his series of historical portraits at Windsor, must now claim our notice. We find seven works by this artist at Manchester—none of them remarkable, even as specimens of the unpleasing colouring and mediocre design of the painter. The portrait of "Kemble as Coriolanus" (175) is wholly unimpressive and unsuggestive. Of his other pictures, two alone need be selected for qualified commendation—"Miss Farren, Countess of Derby" (183), and "Lady Leicester as Hope" (202)—both of which are rather attractive, in spite of the bad taste of the allegorical treatment of the latter. The display of works by Etty that has been gathered at Manchester is far more remarkable, both for number and importance. The fame of this great painter as a colourist of the first order will probably increase with the lapse of years. His pictures seem to us to gain in harmony of tone as they grow older, and their surface shows as yet no sign of the decay which is so deplorable in those of Sir Joshua Reynolds. It is to be regretted that, like Rubens, Etty revelled in the profuse anatomical display of the nude female figure, and that his fondness for flesh tints made him comparatively indifferent to beauty of form. Indeed, it is difficult to believe, when one examines the works of this artist, that his late biographer is right in claiming for his memory the credit of an unusually virtuous life and personal habits of the strictest morality. The first Etty that meets us at Manchester is his "Idle

Lake" (205)—a really beautiful bit of colour, and a graceful presentment of a kind of Calypso-like luxury. "Come unto these yellow sands" (211) and "A Bivouac of Cupids" (226) tell their own story, as do "The Toilette" (234) and "Sleeping Nymph and Satyrs" (240). His "Cleopatra" (249), belonging to Mr. Labouchere, is another fine specimen of colour; but it yields the palm to the really exquisite "Cupid" (255) which hangs near it. "Ulysses and the Sirens" (263) is far less pleasing, though full of power and vigorous expression. The next, "The Storm" (273), is a miserable exaggeration—a cockboat, scarcely living in a yeasty sea, the waves of which are very unlike water, and two nearly nude lovers in melodramatic postures of terror and affection. The "Homeric Dance" (281) is a classical vision, in which the colour is unusually sober and well-balanced. "Joan of Arc at the Stake" (349) is a failure—the painter could not rise to the intensity of expression required by the scene; and "St. John preaching in the Wilderness" (372), coarsely drawn, and conceived in a wholly undevotional spirit, is another example of misapplied powers. Still worse is "The Last Judgment" (605), a supplemental picture which we discovered in the Clock Gallery.

Above twenty specimens of Turner's pictures, exhibiting pretty fairly his several manners, form one of the most interesting contributions to the Manchester saloons; but, of course, this great artist is to be thoroughly understood nowhere except in his own Collection, bequeathed to the nation, and now temporarily harboured at Marlborough House. His first picture at Manchester is an example of his worst style—"Pluto carrying away Proserpine" (191). The next is a specimen of his very best manner—"Cologne: the Arrival of a Packet-boat" (224), belonging to Mr. Naylor, by whom it was purchased in 1854 for two thousand guineas. The golden glow of the setting sun, the charming composition of the whole subject, and the bustle of the debarkation contrasted with the repose of the evening scene, form a whole not easily forgotten. The opposite effect of a sunrise is equally well shown in Mr. Wells' "Mouth of the Thames, with Men of War" (228); and Lord Yarborough's "Vintage at Maçon" (229), exhibited in 1803, is another delicious feast of colour, in the early manner of the artist. Nor is "Dolbadarn Castle" (232)—Turner's "diploma picture" on admission into the Royal Academy—a whit inferior. "Saltash" (239) is a glorified vision of that picturesque town, bathed in a liquid amber light, such as one dreams of, but seldom—perhaps never—sees in this climate. We pass over some less remarkable specimens to come to "Barnes Terrace" (256), a beautiful evening view of that quiet and familiar Thames scene. With this may be compared "Walton Bridge" (266), also on the Thames; and one powerful "Coast Scene" (264) may likewise be selected for notice. The "Van Tromp"—in his later manner—is beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals. It would puzzle any one to say which is sky, and which sea, of the splashes of crude paint that are crowded on the canvas. There is more intelligible feeling in the "Meeting of the Waters" (288), but the colour is somewhat dark and indistinguishable. We recur to his earlier manner in "Tabley Lake and Tower" (292); but the picture is a strange idealization of a tame Cheshire mere—with a staring, modern mansion on its bank—into a kind of rough inland sea, bustling with varied and abounding shipping. The next picture bearing Turner's name—the "Sun rising through Vapour" (294)—is full of poetry and magic. The sea and the shipping are such as Vanderelde never conceived, much less executed. And the "Falls of Schaffhausen" (297) is a work of painted poetry, masterly and impressive in the highest degree. The last work of our greatest English painter which we shall touch upon is one of his most celebrated—Lord Yarborough's "Wreck of the Minotaur" (208). No artist has ever imagined anything more awful than the sweep of the surf on the iron-bound coast. The colour unfortunately has somewhat failed, and the light seems scarcely strong enough in the place where the picture is hung. Lord Yarborough has caused this picture, and also his other great Turner, "The Vintage of Maçon," to be engraved at his own cost in aid of the Artists' Benevolent Institution. It is a matter for great congratulation that the noblest landscape painter that England has produced should be so well represented at Manchester.

Sir David Wilkie—the picture of whose burial at sea, in the Turner Gallery, can never be forgotten by those who have studied it—may fitly come next in order among the deceased worthies of the English School. His "Jew's Harp" (235), and the "Blind Man's Buff" (258), from the Queen's Collection, are examples of his earlier and most characteristic manner. Every one knows his "Distraint for Rent" (259), which, together with the first-named picture, belongs now to Mr. Wells. The "Rent Day" (267) is another felicitous example of the genial and chastened humour which places Wilkie midway between Hogarth and the Dutch caricaturists. Less to our taste is his "Death of Sir Philip Sidney" (267)—a subject quite above the painter's mark. And his "Napoleon and Pope Pius VII."—familiar to us all by the engraving—is more fascinating from its historical presentment of the features of the iron-willed captain and the yielding pontiff, than as a work of genuine creative art. "Guess my Name" (274), and "The Card Players" (275) will be favourites with Wilkie's genuine admirers; while tastes will differ as to the "Hookabader" (284), and the "Gentle Shepherd" (287). But of his "grand style," Mr. Holford's "Christopher Columbus in the Convent of La Rabida" (618) is perhaps the

most conciliatory example that could be chosen. Yet there are few who will not regret that our English Teniers was ever induced to change his manner.

The huge picture by James Ward, in rivalry of Paul Potter, of "A Bull, Cow, and Calf" (196)—so conspicuous an object in the first vestibule—will find admirers among graziers and *genre* painters, but it scarcely falls within the limits of real art. Another of Ward's cattle pieces (493), belonging to Mr. Wells, is hung in Saloon F. The strange architectural dreams of John Martin find their representative in the "Fall of Babylon" (422), contributed by Lord Durham; and in Sir W. James's "Last Man" (632), we have another variety of his gloomy imaginations. Very different is the style of W. J. Müller, whose "Slave Market" (225) has considerable merit, and whose landscapes and Egyptian scenes are always striking. We need scarcely, however, particularize his other contributions to this English gallery; nor do the specimens of Reinagle and Shee demand specific notice.

The cabinet pictures of Liversage, such as "Captain Macheath" (412) and the "Cobbler reading Cobbett's Register" (413), should not be overlooked; and there are other careful and minute specimens of the humorous style of this little known artist, who was a native of Manchester. We note two Indian scenes (134 and 144) by "Oriental" Daniell. As we come to our own times and to artists still living, our criticisms may be more sparing, especially as the works exhibited are often inferior specimens of their author's skill, accidentally congregated in this art-reunion. Mulready, however, need not complain of the pieces which illustrate his style. In his "Barber's Shop" (347) there is not much that is noticeable; but for masterly colour and design his "Forgotten Word" (355), and the "Bathers" (357), are almost unrivalled among the works of living painters, and there are other well-known works of his of almost equal excellence. Sir E. Landseer, another veteran, is richly represented—not only in his fine animal painting, but in his rarer portraiture. Here is his early work, the "Dogs of St. Bernard" (391), from Ilam Hall; and also, as examples of his strange speciality of depicting human foibles or humours under the disguise of the brute creation, we have his "Alexander and Diogenes" (336), and "Dignity and Impudence" (337). Among his other works may be noticed Mr. Naylor's picture, called "There is Life in the Old Dog yet" (331), the "Shepherd's Grave" (345), from Mr. Well's Collection, Mr. Miller's "Children of the Mist" (402), and Lord Breadalbane's "Stag at Bay" (435). We observed two works by T. S. Cooper, of which the "Halt on the Falls" (459)—a spirited view of cattle with Scotch peasants—is the most memorable. With him one associates F. R. Lee, whose "Landscape with Deer" (373) and his last year's painting of the "Plymouth Breakwater" (544)—a very truthful and poetical thought—are here exhibited. It is scarcely necessary to describe or enumerate the characteristic pieces of school-boy life contributed by Webster, with which every one is familiar. Many will be glad to see his "Smile" and "Frown" (447 and 452) from the Redleaf Collection. Here, too, are several of Newton's careful and somewhat laboured figure-pieces—some finished fruit-pieces by Lance and the Miss Muries—and some woodland scenes by Anthony. F. Danby's "Opening of the Sixth Seal" (395) and his "Lake of Zurich" (578) are good specimens of his peculiar colour-effects; and of three capital Creswicks, the "Rocky Lake" (321) is the most noticeable. Messrs. Grant, Pickersgill, Boxall, and Ward are not particularly fortunate in the selection of their works exhibited at Manchester; but the respective merits of the styles of C. Landseer, Hart, Egg, and Goodall may be well understood from the specimens here collected. There are average works of Sant—one of them, his "Infant Samuel" (445), the favourite of the print-shops; and also of Redgrave and Macleise, including his "Ghost-scene in Macbeth" (522)—in which the ingeniously imagined spectre is very different from the substantial Banquo of Madame Ristori's tragedy. We observed, also, a pretty autumnal landscape (566) by T. Linnell, jun.—two Claudesque Greek views by Linton—and a splendid group of Stansfield's, including his "Passage of the Magra" (343), belonging to Lord Ellesmere, and that most poetical thought, the "Abandoned Ship" (504). By Roberts there are, among others, his "Rome" (434) and "Seville Cathedral" (535 and 538)—the exterior and interior. Very admirable are Philip's two Spanish pictures—"Agua Fresca" (571) and "Bidassoa" (573). Here, too, are six or seven of the prettinesses of Frith, and the scenic nudités of Frost. Naples" (340), by Uwins, is a gem of colour; and the promising "Death of Chatterton" (371), by Wallis, is marvellously vivid in tint and strangely powerful in design. Leighton's huge "Procession of Cimabue" (520) has been sent by the Queen—a picture which excited hopes that have not yet been realized by this young artist.

Two more groups of names will alone need to be noticed. The feeling and purity of Lord Overstone's "Moses consigned to the Nile" (442), by Eddis, make us regret that this artist has almost abandoned the higher line of art for portraiture. At least eight pictures illustrate the unequal style of Herbert. Of these, "Lear disinheriting Cordelia" (329) is over-theatrical—the "Piracy of the Brides of Venice" (333) is abler in colouring than in design—the "Boy Daniel" (468) is unworthy of its subject—and "John reproving Herod" (625), though striking, is frigid and mannered. His portrait, however, of the Quixote-looking Horace Vernet (525) is very welcome. Of Sir C. Eastlake's

refined but often feeble style, we like the "Pilgrims in sight of Rome" (330), lent by the Duke of Bedford—it is thoroughly Italian in tone and spirit. The "Sketcher" (351) might pass—and it is no small praise to say so—for a washed-out Giorgione. "Christ weeping over Jerusalem" (359) somewhat loses by age. His "Heloise" (432) is spiritual, but wants force. Two pictures alone bear the name of Dyce, whose "Virgin and Child" (623) is at once naturalistic and insipid, but whose "Jacob and Rachel" (341) is full of sentiment and expression.

We reserve for the last a troop of pre-Raffaellites. Millais is represented by one of his best and most profound works—the "Autumn Leaves" (543) of last year—a perfect miracle of intense colour. Holman Hunt's "Hiring Shepherd" (424) is more repulsive than ever from the brutal ugliness of its figures. His "Valentine rescuing Sylvia" (470) is thoughtful and fascinating. "Strayed Sheep" (488) is a gem of minute delineation and excessive intensity of colour. The "Awakened Conscience" (550) remains unrivalled for the significance of its moral lesson to the initiated mind; but even this picture, as we judged from the remarks of some Manchester excursionists, scarcely tells its painful story with sufficient plainness. "Claudio and Isabella" (565) is the most masterly of Mr. Hunt's excellent contributions to this collection. "Convent Thoughts" (325), by C. A. Collins, is somewhat stiff and affected, though its execution is photographic in its elaboration. The facile and sentimental prettiness of Dobson may be seen in his "Tobit and the Angel" (517), and his "Prosperous Days of Job" (433). Next we have two pictures by F. M. Brown, of which the second, "Christ washing Peter's feet" (554), is provokingly unsatisfactory considering the thoughtfulness displayed in the design. Finally, we observe the somewhat over-praised "April Love" (572), by Hughes, and the "Burd Helen" (403), of last year's exhibition by Windus.

It will be seen that nearly every name and manner of any note among modern British painters finds a sufficient representative in this most interesting and instructive collection. It would be painful to think of its speedy dispersion, if we did not hope that a national gallery of national art would ere long be formed. At present there is no place but Manchester where the present achievements of the British school can be calculated and compared, its faults noted, its merits estimated, and an augury drawn as to its prospects for the future.

LADY MACBETH.

AS soon as the English public became accustomed to the displays of Madame Ristori's genius in the representation of tragedy, a general desire was felt to see her in the part of Lady Macbeth. To be able to act Lady Macbeth is to come up to the English traditional standard of excellence in an actress. A greater interest will always be felt in this country when any of the great Shakspearian parts are adequately represented than when success is achieved in embodying the creations of a foreign poet. And not only is Lady Macbeth the greatest part which an actress can find in Shakspeare, but it is inseparably associated with the name of the greatest actress that England has produced. Those who can remember Mrs. Siddons were therefore anxious to see how far Madame Ristori's conception of the part would agree with that with which Mrs. Siddons had made them familiar. And every one felt that the main elements of Lady Macbeth's character were exactly such as to find a fitting exponent in Madame Ristori. Accordingly, an Italian version of *Macbeth* has been made expressly for the purpose, and on yesterday week Madame Ristori took the part for the first time. No success could have been more complete. Her whole conception of the character was thoroughly original. It varied in many points from the traditions of the English stage; but, although slightly coloured by the habits of Southern life, and therefore unlike what we have been used to on the English stage, yet in itself it was a masterpiece. Henceforth, in England, it will always rank as one of the very best parts played by Madame Ristori. If she performs it abroad, it will be less a favourite than the plays written expressly for her, only because she has much less to do, and is so much less on the stage. Here we are compensated for this by the interest attaching to the part itself; and it must be said that although in *Macbeth* there is comparatively little of her acting, that little is of the first quality. Perhaps there is no one piece of acting in all Madame Ristori's representations equal to her performance in the celebrated scene where Lady Macbeth walks in her sleep.

Any one who has seen *Rosamunda* may easily imagine the air of physical as well as moral strength with which Madame Ristori, as Lady Macbeth, asserts her superiority over the doubting, wavering murderer in the early part of the play. So, too, any one who has seen the *Medea* will readily understand how much Madame Ristori makes of the passage in which Lady Macbeth exclaims to her husband, when hesitating to abide by his resolution—

I have given suck; and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

The acting is of the same type as that where Medea uses the well-known simile of the leopard. Action accompanies each

word. Lady Macbeth, as she speaks, seems to dandle a baby in her arms—to smile on it—to clasp it to her breast—to tear it passionately from her, hurl it to the ground, watch its agonies—and then to rise to a larger stature as she stands, proud and resolute, over the wreck she has made. This rapid succession of distinct points of acting, this resolution of a general idea into the energetic exhibition of its parts, is the leading peculiarity of Madame Ristori's performances. It is successful with her simply because it is natural. She belongs to a nation accustomed to express every play of passion and every shade of feeling by gesticulation. She of course has subordinated the national habit to the requirements and possibilities of art, and every word and movement has been evidently most carefully studied; but still this series of pantomimic gestures is fundamentally Italian, and is neither to be criticised as excessive or unnatural in Madame Ristori, nor to be raised into an indispensable part of high acting. It is simply something which we admire and enjoy in this particular actress.

We need not attempt to follow Madame Ristori through the details of the play, further than to remark that in the banquet scene she supposes Lady Macbeth to have no perception of the ghost of Banquo, nor any comprehension of the feelings of her husband. Her Lady Macbeth in this scene is therefore a person unfeignedly amazed, and only disturbed by the thought that her husband should be so weak. The great triumph of the actress's art was achieved in the sleep-walking scene, which was received with the most breathless attention by the audience, and which fascinated with its intense interest all who saw it. Its leading peculiarity was the voice in which Madame Ristori spoke—a low, murmuring tone, almost a whisper, but perfectly audible, which conveyed most powerfully the notion of something mysterious, strange, and terrible. The wringing of the hands, the smelling of the spots of blood, the uncertain, passionate appeals to Macbeth, the wandering of the mind, the attempt at self-consolation, the way in which, as if impelled by a superior force, she seemed to be drawn rather than to move off the stage, will long dwell in the memory of every one who has witnessed Madame Ristori's rendering of this touching and startling scene. The impression made by the actress was equal to that made by the poet; and when this is said, there is nothing more that can be said.

MUSIC.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

FRA DIAVOLO is the most popular work of the prolific Auber. In England it has almost become naturalized, and in its English dress it is known to every one. Whenever a spasmodic attempt is made to get up a national opera, as we see happen every now and then, the first thing done is to bring out *Fra Diavolo*. Up to the present time, however, it has been excluded from the Italian repertoires; and thus to hear it at the Royal Italian Opera is a species of novelty. Moreover, it seems to be the only novelty of this description which we are likely to be indulged with this season, notwithstanding the talk of *Cimarosa*, *Nozze di Figaro*, and comic opera. Let us be thankful, then, for this small inroad which was achieved upon the vested interests of Verdi, Donizetti, and Co., on Thursday night, when the promised *Fra Diavolo* was at length actually produced. In order to adapt the work to the poetical requirements of the Italian stage, M. Scribe, the original author of the libretto, has lent a helping hand, and with his assistance, Poet Maggioni has manufactured an Italian version in the usual racy style which distinguishes these productions. M. Auber has himself made the alterations necessary in the score, and added some new touches. The scenery has been prepared with great pains, and the last view of Terracina, in particular, does credit to the pencil of Mr. Beverley.

The parts were thus distributed:—*Fra Diavolo*, Sig. Gardoni; Lord Roeburg, Sig. Ronconi; Lady Pamela, Madlle. Marai; Lorenzo, Sig. Neri-Baraldi; Matteo, Sig. Polonini; Zerlina, Madlle. Bosio; Giacomo, M. Zelger; Beppo, Sig. Tagliafico.

Fra Diavolo is a character not easy to realize perfectly. The bandit transformed into a marquis requires some delicacy of treatment. Signor Gardoni is hardly ferocious enough by nature, perhaps, to do this bold adventurer full justice. Ronconi, in a suit of nankin, looked the travelling Englishman to perfection, but infused less caricature into the part than is usually done. Madlle. Bosio sang the music of Zerlina charmingly, introducing some new passages of a brilliant character which M. Auber has added for her especial behoof. Signor Neri-Baraldi was a little heavy as Lorenzo, the young chief of the carabineers—the lover of Zerlina; but with his singing we have no fault to find. The two bandits, Giacomo and Beppo, were inimitably got up by M. Zelger and Sig. Tagliafico. The bye-play of these two worthies was full of drollery from beginning to end; and the trio, in which the pair join with *Fra Diavolo*, was sung so well as to gain the single *encore* of the evening.

As far as external appliances could go, nothing was wanting to give effect to the opera, the *mise-en-scène* being excellent, and the orchestra doing its part with eminent efficiency. Yet there appears something either in the Italian language, or in the habits and traditions of the Italian stage, unfavourable to Auber's music. It is, like Mozart's, too full of *esprit* to be rattled off like the platitudes of the Italian composers, as a mere exercise of vocalization. We have certainly seen more impression pro-

duced by the beautiful airs of Fra Diavolo than was the case on Thursday evening. Of the performance of Mr. Costa's band it is impossible to speak too highly. The overture was played with a delicacy and perfection which we have never heard surpassed; and the accompaniments throughout were marked with the same care of execution. Possibly a few repetitions, and a little greater familiarity with the music on the part of the singers, will be productive of some improvements in the general effect.

HALLÉ'S PIANOFORTE RECITALS.

DURING the last few weeks there has been the usual outburst of concerts, of all kinds and magnitudes—the monster species perhaps a little less rampant than it was wont to be. We have little taste for chronicling these performances, in which “the beef of to-day succeeds the mutton of yesterday, as the mutton of yesterday did the veal of the day before”—and then again veal, mutton, and beef in eternal rotation. The public has an appetite, and a vast one, and caterers are neither few nor inactive; but the particulars of this mighty feast must remain, for the most part, by us unrecorded. Amidst the general roar, the modest pianoforte recitals of M. Charles Hallé may have almost escaped notice; but such of the lovers of that instrument and of classical music as have found them out, will have enjoyed some of the choicest banquets which the whole season has furnished. These recitals have taken place in the Dudley Gallery, in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, where, in the midst of masterpieces of early Italian art, a small and select audience has assembled to hear M. Hallé interpret the thoughts of Beethoven and Mozart as few can do so well as he. At the last one, on Monday, M. Hallé played Beethoven's Pastoral sonata in D, that charming inspiration, so different from the Pastoral symphony, yet so full of the country. The first movement perfectly suggests a walk through woods and fields, among hills and streams, yet without the smallest attempt at anything directly pictorial. Why it should have the effect it is difficult to say; but we never hear it without distinct visions of certain schoolboy rambles in chosen haunts. A capriccio of Clementi followed, like an ancient damsel, full of the smiles and graces of a bygone age, but withal wrinkled and scraggy. Then a fantasia and sonata by Mozart, still in full prime of undying youth, for these are of the race that never grow old. The sonata in E minor, by Beethoven, op. 90, one of charming simplicity and beauty, was admirably “recited” by M. Hallé. The lighter dishes in this tastefully chosen repast were two little meditations, “Dans les bois,” by Heller, a barcarolle by Chopin, and a handful of Mendelssohn's Lieder ohne Worte by way of dessert.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

AT the last meeting of the Society, a paper was read *On the Causes and Phenomena of the Repulsion of Water from the Feathers of Waterfowl and the Leaves of Plants*, by Dr. Buist, F.R.S.

When Dr. Buist was residing in Bombay, in the neighbourhood of a number of small tanks or ponds abounding with the lotus or sacred bean of India, and also with four different varieties of water-lily, he was struck by the different appearances presented by these when immersed in water, or when water was sprinkled on them. The leaves of the lily, like those of the lotus, floated with considerable buoyancy on the surface, but never, like the lotus, rose above it on a tall independent stem. The leaf of the lily is full of holes about the size of a pin's head, and serrated at the edges. Through these, when the leaf is pressed down, the water perforates freely. The upper surface of the leaf is smooth and shining, and water runs off it as it does off a piece of glass, or greased surface. When placed under the water at an angle of about 45°, the leaf of the lily seems to change colour. The dark purple leaf of the red lily appears of a bright rich pink; and the dark green or bluish-green of the white, pink, and blue lilies seem to become of a bright emerald-green, the intensity of their hues varying with the angle at which the immersed leaf is seen.

When the lotus leaf is placed under water, it reflects light like a mirror, so that the image of any object, if presented to it at a proper angle, is seen by the spectator as distinctly as if the surface were one of polished metal. When water is thrown on the surface of a floating leaf, it flows off like a pool of quicksilver, reflecting light from the whole of its lower surface. This holds good on all occasions—the repellent property of the leaf exists, however, only on the upper surface. This peculiarity is familiar to the natives, who have founded on it a kind of proverb which may be thus translated:—The good and virtuous man is not enslaved by passion nor polluted by vice, for though he may be immersed in the waters of temptation, yet, like the lotus leaf, he will rise uninjured by them.

On examining carefully the cause of this natural phenomenon, Dr. Buist found that the lotus leaf is covered by short microscopic papillæ, which entangle the air and establish a kind of air plate over the entire surface of the leaf, with which in reality the water never comes in contact. Another singular peculiarity connected with the structure of the lotus leaf is the curious respiratory pores which dot its surface. The leaves of the lotus, when full-sized, are from a foot to sixteen inches in diameter. On cutting off a leaf six inches broad, the stem of which was a little less than

the third of an inch in diameter, thirty cubic inches of air were collected in an hour, while the vital energies of the plant must have been injured by its mutilation. At this rate, a tank covered by lotus leaves throws off a large proportion of air daily.

Dr. Buist considers that sensible respiration is not at all essential to the repelling power of leaves. The most beautiful manifestation of it that he has met with is in the Pistia, a little floating water-plant, abounding in shallow tanks in India, and much resembling common endive. When pressed under the surface of the water, the leaves present the appearance of molten silver. The same appearance is presented on cabbages, young clover, and a vast variety of other leaves, and it is the cause of the bright pearl lustre of dew. Precisely the same phenomenon is manifested on the wings and backs of divers when they plunge into the water. In this case Dr. Buist conceives that the explanation has been ascribed most erroneously to the existence of grease or oil in the feathers, whereas he conceives that it is due to the presence of an air plate repelling the water, so that it never comes in contact with the feathers. The trimming process so carefully performed by water fowl is probably an application of oil or grease, with the object of separating or dressing the little fibres of the feathers so as to produce an arrangement fitted to entangle the air. The reflection of light from the lower surface of the water is the proof of want of contact, when absolute contact exists even without diffusion or permanent wetting. A piece of polished marble or of glass readily throws off the water without remaining wetted, but no reflection is in this case observable. Dr. Buist throws out a hint to the manufacturers of waterproof cloths, conceiving that they might produce a surface which would entangle and retain a film of air, rendering the substance impervious to water, while, at the same time, the texture would admit the free transmission of respiration or moisture.

REVIEWS.

BUCKLE'S HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION IN ENGLAND.*

THIS very remarkable book reflects honour, not only on the author, but on English literature. It is the first volume of a History of Civilization in England—perhaps the most interesting subject, if satisfactorily treated, that a student of philosophical history could have offered to him. We can only say that we think Mr. Buckle justified in undertaking it, and it needs but a few minutes' reflection to understand what is involved in competency for such a task. This is another of those great gatherings of knowledge in a proper framework, and with an adequate arrangement, which seem to be the especial fruits of English genius in the present day, and of which Mr. Grote's *History of Greece*, Mr. Merivale's *History of Rome*, and Dean Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*, are such conspicuous instances. We think we shall make our readers best understand the scope of this introductory volume, its relations to the whole work, and its claims on the serious attention of every one who wants to comprehend the real meaning of history, if we proceed at once to examine its contents, instead of offering any preliminary remarks on its merits. It lies so far out of the range of ordinary works on the subject, that criticism would be useless until the reader has made himself acquainted with the position which the author occupies.

Mr. Buckle begins by declaring it to be his object to treat history as the material from which we may generalize the laws of human action. He has, of course, to assume that human action is subjected to definite unvarying laws, and that these laws may in some appreciable manner be ascertained. This assumption trenches on the ground occupied by the conflicting dogmas of Free-will and Predestination—dogmas which, as the author parenthetically suggests, may have been impressed on the mind of man by the circumstances of his life in successive stages of society. His precarious tenure of subsistence while in a nomad state may have familiarized him with the notion of chance—of everything happening without previous plan—and so of free-will; and his observation of the regularity of the seasons, when he had passed into an agricultural state, may have brought home to him the notion of everything being determined and foreseen. Perhaps this suggestion is more ingenious than true; but, at any rate, its truth does not affect the main thread of the author's discussion. It is obvious that Predestination has nothing really to do with the question of the regularity of human action: for it is not an account of anything which we trace in the phenomena before us, but a mere logical deduction from the attributes we hold to be involved in the idea of God. Free-will certainly is, or appears to be, a most important part of the action of individuals; but if we look at society as a whole, we see that general influences and general movements of the mind swallow up and include the determinations of individual free-will. Probably no one doubts that this is, to some extent, the case; but most persons conceive that it is only the case within certain limits. Mr. Buckle, on the contrary, assumes that it is absolutely true, and that all human action is determined by uniform laws. He defends the assumption, partly by the con-

* *History of Civilization in England*. By Henry Thomas Buckle. Vol. I. London: John W. Parker and Son. 1857.

sideration that human actions are the joint produce of the mind of man and of external nature, and that we know the latter of the two factors to be governed by uniform laws, and partly by the testimony afforded by statistics, which show that while a community is in the same general state, the same crimes are repeated in the same numerical proportions. We will not inquire whether these statistics or any other considerations warrant the broad proposition that all human actions are regulated by uniform law, because it is not absolutely necessary for Mr. Buckle's purpose that this should be the case. We must all acknowledge that general causes operate on the condition and progress of human society. The question is, whether these causes can be ascertained, and the mode of their action analysed.

The difficulty, we need scarcely say, lies in the complexity of the subject-matter—in the vast number of causes which combine to produce human action, and in the ceaseless reaction of cause and effect. In order to penetrate this labyrinth, Mr. Buckle pursues a method on the adaptability of which to historical investigations the main value of his book depends. He makes the most general division which the subject admits, and then selects one branch of that division as the more important. With this alone he occupies himself, rejecting altogether the less important. Of course, he admits that the subordinate cause will constantly modify the primary one; but in order to pursue the inquiry at all, he attends only to that which is modified—to that which, by the permanence of its presence, may be termed the substantial, as opposed to the accidental. The process is repeated until he arrives at that which he considers the most efficient cause, at once general and proximate, of human action in progressive societies. We say "in progressive societies," for otherwise he would be writing the history, not of civilization, but of the world. If this method, which we may term that of the isolation of primary causes, is one that can be depended on, and if he has used it aright, it is obvious that Mr. Buckle's book has a scientific value—if the method or its employment is faulty, the book can only be a collection of hints or opinions about history, more or less valuable. We think that on the whole it deserves to be regarded in the former light, and that its leading principle is scientific and true.

As everything which conduces to form human action must proceed from within or from without the mind, Mr. Buckle first inquires whether we are to look for the primary cause in the sphere of mental or of physical laws. He observes that, unless the natural conditions in which man is placed are such as to make nature subordinate to him, and induce him to undertake and prosecute the conquest of nature, the balance is inclined so powerfully against man, and nature so injures or overwhelms him, that he is incapable of a high civilization. The natural influences that chiefly operate on man may be divided under two heads. The first head includes climate, food, and soil—the second includes the general aspects of nature. If climate, food, and soil are very favourable to human life, if nature supplants the labour of man, the consequence is that a civilization is attained, early, rapid, but, after a short time, stationary; and the main reason why a continued advance is impossible, is, Mr. Buckle thinks, because under such circumstances wealth is sure to be unequally distributed. Population presses on subsistence, as food is obtained so easily as to stimulate to the utmost the increase of population. Oxidized food—the main requirement of the inhabitants of a hot country—is procurable from vegetables, and the copiousness of tropical vegetation provides a ready supply. And very little food suffices: for in a hot climate men require little to maintain animal heat, and are so inactive as to undergo little physical waste. Fertility of soil in hot climates accordingly tends to make population increase, and to place the labourer at the mercy of his employer. Satisfied with the minimum of subsistence, the poor man has no hope or wish to better himself; and thus permanent castes are formed, and society gets fixed in a non-progressive type. Mr. Buckle traces the actual operation of these causes in the history of India, of Egypt, of Mexico, and Peru; and this part of his volume is not only very learned, but very interesting.

That the general aspects of the external world in those parts of the globe where nature is most grand, threatening, and magnificent, act unfavourably on the mind of man by unduly stimulating the imagination, is a proposition too obvious and familiar to need proof. On the other hand, where nature is at once beautiful and serviceable, she not only quickens the poetical feelings, but strengthens and educates the understanding. Mr. Buckle adduces, as a remarkable example of this contrast, the difference between India and Greece, and between the mythologies, the poetry, and the art of the two countries. We shall get into difficulties if we push the general truth too far, and attempt to trace the exact relation of every modification of climate with every variation of social character; but the general truth is indisputable, and Mr. Buckle is quite warranted in stating that there has always been something grotesque, trivial, and imperfect in every civilization except in that of the European nations, and that this imperfection is in a great measure attributable to the influence of the aspects of nature. We are now, therefore, in a position to answer the first question proposed to us. The primary cause of human action in progressive societies must be sought for in the influence of mental, not of physical laws—for nature is either subsidiary, or prevents progress altogether. And fur-

ther, as the mind of man is continually subduing nature, when not subdued by it, it is evident that the conquest of nature is the first indispensable condition and the great constituent element in the progress of man.

How are we to set to work to examine the mental laws on which we are now to fix our attention? Not, says Mr. Buckle, by adopting the process of the metaphysician, who examines the constitution of his own mind. For, in the first place, the mind cannot separate itself as a thinking power from itself as an object; and, secondly, we find that all metaphysicians are divided on a question which they cannot possibly settle—whether man has ideas independently of experience. We must therefore, he says, look at mental laws, not as exhibited in a single mind, but as reflected in society at large. We shall then find an obvious distinction at the outset, which we may assume without inquiry or proof—the distinction between these laws according as they are moral or intellectual; and our next inquiry will be whether the former or the latter are the more important. We must confess that we scarcely think Mr. Buckle justified in quarrelling with metaphysicians when he occupies such different ground. A writer who is content to begin with such a fact as the difference between moral and intellectual laws, must surely be aware that this fact is one that suggests a further analysis. It may be sufficient for Mr. Buckle's purpose to suppose that the difference is understood, but other inquirers may reasonably ask in what it really consists. If we pursue the inquiry, we shall soon come on the ground of the metaphysician, as will be the case if we start from the primary facts of any science whatever; for the very aim of metaphysics is to supply, not the contents of any one science, but the groundwork of all. It would have seemed much more to the purpose if Mr. Buckle had pointed out why he determined to reject as his starting-point, not metaphysics, but psychology. It might have appeared that it would be proper to ascertain the operation of mental laws in the individual before examining their operation in masses of men; and we cannot suppose Mr. Buckle to mean that psychology proceeds only by self-analysis, for it employs the verification of the experience of other men. Of course he was quite right to reject psychology as a part of his task, for otherwise his labour would be superhuman. His subject is man in society, and he takes the salient facts of his subject which every one recognises, and begins with them. He could not do otherwise; but he steps out of his way to blame persons who fancy beginning a little higher up; and we must say that his language is not at all clear, nor his reasoning at all conclusive, in this part of his work.

That the primary cause for which we are in search is to be looked for in the sphere of intellectual, not of moral laws, Mr. Buckle asks us to admit on the following considerations:—1. The great dogmas of morality do not change, whereas intellectual truths are progressive, and are therefore most likely to be the main source of progress generally. 2. All great changes in European society can be immediately connected with intellectual movements. 3. Not only is intellect progressive, but its acquisitions are permanent, whereas the results of moral feeling are transitory. 4. If an ignorant man is good, he does more harm than an ignorant man who is bad, for he persists in his mistakes with a conscientious ardour. We may observe that this proposition seems to us stated too broadly, and, though true in the instance taken by Mr. Buckle—that of religious persecution—it is open to great exception. 5. It is to the diffusion of knowledge, not to any alteration in moral feeling, that we owe the comparative cessation of the two greatest evils man inflicts on his fellows—religious persecution and war. We think that Mr. Buckle makes good his point. The primary cause of progress is in the intellect; but the subordinate cause—that is, moral motives—modifies the primary cause indefinitely. We accept this conclusion, but we do not wish to overrate its importance. The modifications produced by the moral and spiritual nature of man are so enormous, that unless they can be satisfactorily estimated, the apprehension of the primary cause of action can only lead to very limited and imperfect results. A step is made in science, but it is only a step.

We can now understand what is the fundamental position of the author. It is that the key to the history of civilization consists in the investigation of the successive movements of the human intellect, exhibited primarily in the conquest of man over nature. The history of civilization will record these movements and trace the actions resulting from them as modified by subordinate causes, of which the two principal are moral laws, and the effect of nature on man. To complete this history throughout would be far beyond the power of any single individual, and Mr. Buckle is, therefore, obliged to select the history of civilization in a particular country. He fixes on England, because intellectual movements have been less controlled here by pressure from constituted authorities than in France—are not confined to a few philosophers, as in Germany—and are not lowered to the standard of the multitude, as in the United States. But inasmuch as the very peculiarities which disqualify these nations are most important modifications of the general progress of mankind, and as they are visible, although in a minor degree, in English civilization, Mr. Buckle, before entering on his special subject, goes so far into the general History of Civilization as to examine these modifications in their most striking phase. Before entering on the History of Civilization in England, we are to have not only a conception of what is the primary cause of

progress, but also an exemplification of the chief modifications to which it is subject—modifications which we shall hereafter meet with in the history of civilization in our own country, but which we shall thus have previously examined through a magnifying-glass. And this is the purport of the Introduction—in itself an undertaking of great magnitude. In the history of France we are to see the “protective spirit” (*i. e.* the pressure on intellectual movement exercised by the supreme authority of the State) exhibited in its political form. In the history of Spain we are to see the same spirit exhibited in its religious form. The laws of the diffusion of knowledge are to be exemplified by the history of America; and the use of the deductive method, and the existence of a separate intellectual class, are to be illustrated by the history of Scotland, substituted for Germany as presenting more points of analogy with England. This first volume only carries us down to the end of the account of the protective spirit as exhibited in France. The remainder of the Introduction is yet to be published.

Before examining the history of the protective spirit, Mr. Buckle pauses to indicate that all intellectual movements have one point in common. They all spring from that habit of mind which he calls scepticism, but which—as scepticism is a word generally used in a deflected sense—we may periphrasize as the habit of not accepting any received truth except after an examination of evidence, and of refraining to make any assertion on either side farther than is warranted by inquiry. It is very evident that scepticism, as thus defined, is the fruit of a prior intellectual movement, and is a complex condition of the mind, capable of analysis, and presumably traceable to a remoter origin. The author does not, however, pursue any such preliminary investigation; and at first sight, it appears superfluous to dwell at any length on the fruitfulness of scepticism. We do not seem to learn much when we are told that inquiry springs from the desire and habit of inquiry. But we conceive Mr. Buckle to have, in this part of his work, a double object. He wishes to show, first, that the great social changes of Europe are due to an intellectual movement—a position he assumes in an earlier part of the volume; and secondly, that the intellect, when operating as a source of social change, especially develops itself in that way in which it undertakes the conquest of nature—that is, by the methods of scientific investigation. With this view he runs rapidly over the history of England since the Reformation, noting the steps of progress, and pointing out how inquiry has led to toleration in religion, and to liberty in politics. He then turns to France, and observes that in the sixteenth century a corresponding movement took place, represented by Montaigne and Descartes in literature, and by Henry IV. and Richelieu in politics, but that it was checked in the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV. by the influence of the protective spirit, to the history of which he therefore turns.

Mr. Buckle assigns to feudalism, and to the existence of a territorial aristocracy, by far the largest share in the nurture of this spirit in Europe; and he refers—though, as we think, far too exclusively—the whole difference between French and English history, and between the political habits of the two countries, to the fact that William the Conqueror made the English aristocracy so weak as to have to seek strength by allying itself with the people. The main position, however, that the French aristocracy was by far the more powerful, and the more completely hardened into a caste, is indisputable. Mr. Buckle, after showing how this acted in the Middle Ages, by depriving of vitality the municipal institutions of France—and how the league of the nobles to support the sympathetic protectiveness of the Catholic clergy failed in England, and succeeded in France—passes to the history of the revolutionary wars which broke out in both countries in the first half of the seventeenth century. The English Rebellion prospered, for it was a war of class against class, and the democratic or inferior class was strong enough in habits of self-reliance to make its numbers tell. But the Fronde was merely a division of the aristocratical body, and the side naturally prevailed which had the advantage of being countenanced by the Sovereign, the social and political head of the feudal hierarchy. A survey is then taken of the great and almost absolute triumph of the protective spirit under Louis XIV. A sketch follows of the early reaction against this, under the Regency and Louis XV.—when the French mind, being still too fettered to dream of attacking the Government, attacked the Church—and then of the later phase of this reaction, when the Government was itself attacked, and the resistance to authority finally issued in the Revolution.

We have here hurried, in a few sentences, over matter which, in the volume before us, occupies nearly three hundred pages. We cannot do more in our columns than speak generally of such a work. But there are two portions of this history of the protective spirit in France, so new and so valuable, that we must specially direct the attention of our readers to them. The first is a most elaborate and learned discussion of the degree in which English literature and thought influenced France in the early part of the eighteenth century. The second is a review of the labours of the French in the field of physical science in the latter half of that century—the object of the author being, of course, to show that the intellectual movement which produced the French Revolution was especially allied in character and method to the mental operations of scientific inquiry.

This skeleton of the contents of Mr. Buckle's book will give our readers, we hope, some notion of its general purpose, but it

can give none of the extraordinary richness and variety of the materials used. The main question is, whether Mr. Buckle's method is wrong or right—when we have determined that point, we are at liberty to admire the minor excellences of his work. Even a reader who should reject his method would find hints of the greatest value, and a great number of pithy and pregnant remarks. But we think the whole work greater than its parts. It is the scientific conception of history, the conviction of a universal order of the internal and external world, the co-ordination of the different branches of human knowledge, that constitute the chief merit of the book. The mere fact that such a subject has been undertaken will tell powerfully on the future labours, not only of English thinkers, but of the thinkers of all nations. Mr. Buckle has created a new standard of philosophical history, and we cannot praise his work either more highly or more justly than by saying that it as adequately embodies and represents the highest state of inquiry at this day, as the lectures of M. Guizot on Civilization represented that attained a quarter of a century ago. We do not assert that the one book is better than the other—we merely say that the general human intellect advances, and that the advance has found an expression in this work. We shall look for the succeeding volumes with the greatest interest. In conclusion, we ought, perhaps, to remark that Mr. Buckle lays himself open to criticisms on which persons who do not attempt seriously to appreciate his book will be apt to seize. He is apt to run off into disproportionate digressions—he is very dogmatic—he indulges in language needlessly bitter against persons and institutions ordinarily respected—he floods his pages with references not always very valuable or necessary—and he raises a smile at the outset by dedicating to his mother this “the first volume of his first work.” We notice these slight defects and foibles, not because they really impair the merit of the work, but merely to avoid the appearance of concealment. In one way, perhaps, they may be serviceable. They will act as a test for readers; for we may be sure that, when special attention is directed to them, it will be because the critic has no aptitude or taste for historical inquiry.

MADAME BOVARY.*

IT was not without considerable hesitation that we determined to review *Madame Bovary*. The book has, however, we are informed, excited great attention at Paris, and has been hailed with much applause, as a specimen of “realism” in fiction, by very eminent French critics. Though it is not a work which we can recommend any man, far less any woman, to read, its success appears to us to be a fact worthy of the attention of all who take an interest in the condition of French society. The story is told in a very few words. M. Bovary, a country apothecary, marries the daughter of a farmer, who is too highly educated for her rank in life. She finds herself extremely dull, and by way of satisfying her love for excitement carries on two successive intrigues, in the course of which she involves herself and her husband in debt to a large amount. His goods are taken in execution. She appeals to her lovers to pay off the execution creditor, and, on their refusal, she poisons herself. Her husband, who loved her passionately, though very foolishly, is inconsolable for her loss, but has implicit confidence in her purity. At last, by an accident, he discovers the letters which had passed between her and her lovers, and dies of grief. Such is the story; and it is obvious enough that it cannot be otherwise than offensive according to our views. Indeed, the volume contains not a few passages which would of themselves justify very strong language if there were any danger that M. Flaubert's example would be followed in this country, or that his book would become popular amongst English readers. We do not, however, feel ourselves called upon to make use of any very indignant expressions. There is no fear that our novelists will outrage public decency. Their weaknesses forbid such dangerous eccentricity quite as much as their virtues.

Whether *Madame Bovary* is a true representation of French life or not, is a question which could only be answered by persons possessed of a special knowledge of the subject, to which we make no pretensions. Some facts about it are, however, sufficiently plain. The author obviously belongs to what, for want of a better name, we must call the realist school of novelists. His style conveys to us the impression that it has been formed upon that of Mr. Thackeray, of whose influence it shows the strongest traces. Thus the first half of the book is taken up with a description of the education and early career of an obscure apothecary, whose widest experience of life consists of a short course of study at Rouen, and who settles down to practice in an obscure hamlet in Normandy, with a fond but troublesome mother—a wife twenty years older than himself, and falsely supposed to be rich, who dies at the end of two or three chapters—no tastes, no amusements, and very little occupation. The dullness of such an existence, its irritating effects upon the spoiled girl who is introduced to it, and the contrast afforded by the splendours to which Madame Bovary and her husband are introduced for one night by the politic invitation of a neighbouring electioneering marquis, are described with great spirit, and bear the marks of a good deal of patient and careful observation. There are also several descriptions of local scenes—especially one

* *Madame Bovary. Mœurs de Province. Par Gustave Flaubert. Paris. 1857.*

of an agricultural show—which are drawn with great spirit, and much apparent fidelity.

We do not therefore feel ourselves at liberty to doubt that the main facts of the novel might well occur without producing any very strong surprise amongst M. Flaubert's countrymen. If this be so, we can only say that not merely the facts and the language, but the whole framework and tendency of the story, are symptoms of the most fatal kind. It is indeed lamentable that any considerable or prominent portion of society in any country should be willing to recognise in such a book as this anything like a portrait of themselves; and it is perhaps even more lamentable that a man of talent should consider such a book a moral one, which we are inclined to believe to be the case with the author of the work before us. The character of Madame Bovary herself is one of the most essentially disgusting that we ever happened to meet with. It is one which we should be extremely sorry to attribute to any woman, and if it could ever become to any extent common, it could not for any length of time be compatible with the existence of society. The notion of duty or responsibility never seems to cross her mind. Neither as a daughter, a wife, nor a mother, does it ever occur to her that she has any other object in life than that of gratifying her own tastes, and especially her love of excitement. Her father's farm is dull—her husband's house is dull—he is not a man of genius—and as she only married him in order to be excited and roused by the society of a person with some aims in life, and some capacity to sustain them, she feels herself personally wronged by his dullness, and takes a vindictive pleasure in betraying him. Her child is only a transient amusement, of which she soon tires. Even in her love, when at last it is aroused, there is nothing generous or noble. She wishes to sacrifice each of her lovers to her own inclinations, trying in vain to persuade one of them to rob his employer, and the other to ruin his reputation by eloping with her. It must, however, be owned that the men are as bad as the woman. The lovers are paltry, heartless cowards, the husband a weak fool, and the other characters wretched compounds of cognate vices. From the first page of the book to the last, not a person is introduced calculated to excite any other feelings than contempt or disgust. No skill in the mechanical part of a novelist's art can redeem a defect so capital as this. We should be sorry to call the book a disgusting performance; but disgust is certainly the most prominent feeling that it awakens.

Perhaps the worst feature of *Madame Bovary* is the obvious intention on the part of the author to write rather a moral book. It may be quite true that breaking the seventh commandment is the only mode of passing her time in which the heroine takes much pleasure; but the most rigorous moralist could not wish her to be more severely punished for it. If the work could be looked upon merely in the light of a precedent, no one can say that it would tell in favour of immorality. Nor is it altogether an answer to this to say that the bad effect of full-length descriptions of vice is not done away with by the good effect of executing poetical justice upon it. This is no doubt true; but in considering the intentions of an author we must remember how very conventional is the standard of what it is permissible to say and to write. No one would call Milton or Shakespeare immoral. Yet *Paradise Lost* and *Othello* contain passages which could not be read aloud to English ladies. Indeed, if it were not for the force of habit, the same difficulty would constantly occur in reading the Bible. The real immorality which is involved in such a tale as *Madame Bovary*, lies in the want which it presumes in its readers of any moral distinctions at all. It says emphatically—though, like all such books, rather clumsily—that adultery may very possibly end in the utter ruin and destruction of the sinning woman; but it does not seem to recognise the fact that in itself, and apart from the occasional and exceptional cases in which it may be so punished, it is vile, hateful, and treacherous. Cut off the last chapter or two of *Madame Bovary*, and the impression left on the reader is that the author rather sympathizes with his heroine. Leave them in, and they show far more dislike of the consequences than of the character of the offence. In fact, strange as such a comparison may seem, *Madame Bovary* has a strong family likeness to a certain class of tracts—those which turn upon what we hope we may call, without offence, a sort of providential *tour de force*. When we hear of a boy who is drowned for boating on Sunday, the logical conclusion is that it is foolish to do that for which you may be drowned, but not that it is wrong to boat on Sunday; and in precisely the same way, we infer from *Madame Bovary* that poisoning by arsenic is a very painful death, and that it is well to avoid what may lead to it, however pleasant.

M. Flaubert's book suggests some reflections more interesting to Englishmen than any which concern either the book or the author. There are probably half a dozen scenes in it which no English author of reputation would venture to insert in any of his publications; and indeed there is no subject on which we are so apt to plume ourselves as the modern purification of our light literature. But is this true? And if it is, how far does it prove that we are more moral than our neighbours? It is true in one sense, no doubt, that our light literature is pure enough. That is, it is written upon the principle that it is never to contain anything which a modest man might not, with satisfaction to himself, read aloud to a young lady. But surely it is very questionable whether it is desirable that no novels should be written except those which are

fit for young ladies to read. It is not so with any other branch of literature. Theology, history, philosophy, morality, law, and physical science are all studied at the reader's peril; and it would be just as prudish to affect to be shocked at finding indecent passages in Herodotus, or in *Cook's Voyages*, as to cry shame on Hale's *Pleas of the Crown*, or Taylor's *Medical Jurisprudence*. Are works of imagination, then, such mere toys that they ought always to be calculated for girlish ignorance? If Shakspeare had never written a line which women in the present day could not read, he would never have been the greatest of poets. If we had only expurgated copies of the classics, we should have a most inadequate conception of Greece and Rome. No doubt our most popular writers of fiction accept, and are proud of, the position which we are describing. Many of them seem to think that the highest function of a poet is the amusement of children; but we are by no means prepared to say that, in literature, emasculation produces purity. Our statistical returns, the nightly appearance of our streets, and those verbatim reports of trials which are so disgusting that the papers which publish them advocate the repeal of the laws which, as they affect to think, necessitate their publication, surely teach us that we are not so very immaculate. Whether a light literature entirely based upon love, and absolutely and systematically silent as to one most important side of it, may not have some tendency to stimulate passions to which it is far too proper ever to allude, is a question which is too wide for our limits on the present occasion; but it is one which we should do well to take into serious consideration before we preach the doctrine that the contemporaries of Mr. Dickens have made a vast step in advance of the contemporaries of Fielding.

DRUMMOND, OF HAWTHORNDEN.*

IN the autumn of 1618, as Ben Jonson, then on his famous foot-pilgrimage, was one morning proceeding from his lodging hard by the Canongate to the Castle of Edinburgh, where he desired to see the room in which his august Sovereign was born, his eye was caught by the display of title-page, frontispiece, and calf-binding in the window of Andro Hart's shop "on the north side of the High-streete, a little beneath the Crosse." Half doubting the prudence of venturing within the reach of temptation in the existing state of his finances, he stopped to see what wares the Scottish literary market could offer—perhaps a little curious to know whether a certain folio, entitled *Works*, and published some two years before, had reached the stalls of North Britain. In turning over Mr. Hart's stock, he lighted upon a newly-printed quarto volume, bearing the title of *Forth Feasting; a Panegyricke to the King's Most Excellent Majesty*. A few lines sufficed to show Jonson that the author, if not a poet of the highest order, was a man of taste, a good versifier, and, what pleased him most, a scholar. His name was William Drummond, of Hawthornden—so the communicative bookseller said—adding that he was a pleasant-spoken gentleman of a proper presence. The name was not unfamiliar to Jonson. He had heard of it from Michael Drayton, and also in connexion with the *Tears of Moliades*—a poem which, as he remembered, gave evidence of a classical turn of thought, and of some not ungraceful fancy. It seemed, then, that a brother poet was living within a few miles distance. What if he went to Hawthornden, and, in right of their common calling, introduced himself to the poet? The journey was not much for any one—a trifle to a man who had just walked from London. He had time enough to spare; and if Drummond should ask him to stay, why Hawthornden would be a much pleasanter place to sojourn in than his Edinburgh lodging, where the chimney smoked, and the baby continually cried, and his landlady would let him have no sack on Sunday.

This little anecdote, for which there is no authority whatever, is in all probability the true version of the commencement of an intimacy the most productive in literary history—an intimacy to which we are indebted for almost all that we know of Ben Jonson personally, for many precious scraps of information about the great men of his time, for a glimpse, however tantalizing, of the manners and inner life of the most robust period in our national growth—and to which must be mainly attributed the interest which the name of Drummond of Hawthornden has for us, and even much of the perfume it carries in the mention, as Charles Lamb quaintly says. It is not easy to isolate Drummond—to get rid of the idea that he comes to the Feast of the Poets rather as the umbra of Ben Jonson than on his own merits. We are apt to think of him as one of two poets who lolled upon the rocks above the Esk in dreamy autumn weather long ago, talking of their craft. One of them was a square-built, rugged-featured man, who spoke quickly, and with vehemence, especially when repeating some stinging epigram on Marston or Dekker—but sometimes with a touch of sadness in his voice, when he recalled some jest of gentle, pleasant Will Shakspeare, who was then lying in the church at Stratford. The other was a person of courtly demeanour, with a polished and somewhat subdued manner, listening in wonderment to the wild Londoner by his side, and never opening his lips except to ask a question. We rather suspect that Jonson found Drummond a little of a bore occasionally, and that in this way some of the acer-

* *The Poetical Works of William Drummond, of Hawthornden.* (Library of Old Authors.) London. 1836.

bity of his Hawthornden conversations may be accounted for. Nothing could be more natural than that Drummond—whose poetry belonged to the English school, and whose sympathies were with the successors of Sidney and Spenser—should be inquisitive about Beaumont, Fletcher, Davies, Sylvester, and other men of mark; but there must have been times when his companion would have preferred to lie and listen to the grasshoppers simmering in the sunshine, or try to make out what tune the waterfall was humming, instead of criticising Chapman's "long Alexandrines," and speculating upon Dr. Donne's chances of immortality.

Drummond has been, beyond a doubt, unjustly treated by Gifford and other critics, on the score of these conversations. He has been accused of spitefulness and malevolence—of decaying Jonson under his roof, and then abusing his confidence. Even were the charge true, we should be, in a measure, bound to wink at the offence, seeing that we have shared in the results; but happily there is no occasion, in this instance, for dishonesty, however venial. Not only did Drummond abstain from publishing his notes—though he might have done so safely after Jonson's death—but he obviously never had any intention of publishing them. From the nature of the memoranda, and the way in which they are arranged, it is clear that his only object was to preserve for his own private delectation the "winged words" of a sound critic and keen observer; and in a man like Drummond, leading a retired life, and out of the reach of the only society he would have cared for, such a desire was not very unnatural or blameworthy. His portrait of Jonson certainly is not flattering; but it was not meant to be so, or to be anything more than a rough sketch of the more prominent peculiarities in his character, hit off while the impressions made by it were vivid; and, from what we know of Jonson, we may be certain that it is drawn to the life. But perhaps the best evidence on Drummond's side is the number of witnesses to character he can call. A spiteful or ill-natured man could scarcely have earned the warm affection—remarkable even in those days, when men hated and loved one another manfully—which Sir William Alexander, Sir Robert Kerr, poet and giant-killer, Michael Drayton, and others, seem to have felt towards him. "My dear, sweet Drummond," "John Davis is in love with you," and similar expressions, occur frequently in the letters he received, and are evidently a tribute to a thoroughly amiable nature rather than to poetic rank. Indeed, Drummond does not seem to have stood very high as a poet in the estimation of contemporaries. Among the commendatory verses appended to his works, we find none bearing the names of the eminent men with whom he was intimate; and Jonson could only say of his poems that "they were all good, save that they smelled too much of the school, and were not after the fancy of the time."

This criticism is more profound than at first sight appears. Drummond's poetry is good, in so far as it is free from positive faults. It has none of the obscurities, far-fetched conceits, or overwrought fancies that were so much in vogue in his day. In all that relates to mere form, it is irreproachable. It is musical, admirably versified—accents or syllables never have improper liberties taken with them. Further than this, it abounds with feeling, pathos, and graceful thoughts gracefully expressed. But with all these virtues, Drummond can never take a higher place than that of a second-rate poet. There is a deficiency in vital power, a want of vigour about him that prevents him from exercising any great influence over his reader. He flies, but never soars. He runs, but seems incapable of leaping; and when you close the book, you have the sensation of having been reading excellent poetry, without being able to fix upon any idea, image, or picture as having made an impression. It is only when he comes in contact with nature that Drummond thoroughly warms up; and this occurs most frequently in his sonnets. The following is a good instance of Drummond's powers as a sonnet-writer:—

Thrice happy he, who by some shady grove,
Far from the clamorous world, doth live his own,
Though solitary, who is not alone,
But doth converse with that eternal love.
O how more sweet is birds' harmonious moan,
Or the hoarse sobbings of the widowed dove,
Than those smooth whisp'ring near a prince's throne,
Which make good doubtful, do the evil approve!
O how more sweet is Zephyr's wholesome breath,
And sighs perfumed, which new-born flowers unfold,
Than that applause vain honour doth bequeath!
How sweet are streams to poison drunk in gold!
The world is full of horrors, falsehoods, slights—
Woods' silent shades have only true delights.

We take the liberty of giving this sonnet as Drummond intended it to be read, and not as the editor of the edition before us has allowed it to be printed. It occurs twice in Drummond's works—in the volume of poems which appeared in 1616, and in the *Flowers of Sion*, published several years after. The later edition, which we may assume contains Drummond's final corrections, with one or two minor variations, has "hoarse" instead of the common-place "soft" in the sixth line. As both forms of the sonnet are to be found in the Maitland Club reprint, which the editor of the present volume professes to follow, it would seem that he has overlooked the discrepancy, or thinks "soft" a more elegant reading—or, what is a more charitable supposition, never heard a wood-pigeon.

All Drummond's poetry shows a keen enjoyment of country life; but nature never intoxicates him and makes him chirp like

old Izaak Walton. It acts as an anodyne, soothing him, and exciting a pleasant melancholy rather than heartiness. When he envies country folk, it is not so much because of the green trees, the bright sun, the new-mown hay, as their immunity from turmoil and care, the fretless life which—

Wise nature's darlings, they live in the world,
Perplexing not themselves how it is hurld.

Drummond's most ambitious works, the *Tears of Mariades*, *Forth Feasting*, and the *Entertainment of King Charles*, are poems of that class which is in relation to poetry proper what a village triumphal arch made of boughs is to a tree. Although, no doubt, such courtly productions looked fresh, and natural, and appropriate on the occasions for which they were intended, in aftertimes they generally seem faded and tawdry, and wear a certain stiff, made-to-order air. For a specimen, therefore, of Drummond in his more stately manner, we turn to his *Hymn of the Nature, Attributes, and Works of God*. In the lines we quote, the reader will perceive a cadence and polish which savour more of the age of Pope than of Donne and Wither:—

O King, whose greatness none can comprehend,
Whose boundless goodness doth to all extend,
Light of all beauty, ocean without ground,
That standing flowest, giving dost abound;
Rich palace, and indweller ever blest,
Never not working, ever yet in rest!
What wit cannot conceive, words say of thee,
Here, where, as in a mirror, we but see
Shadows of shadows, atoms of thy might,
Still owly-eyed when staring on thy light,
Grant that, released from this earthly jail,
And freed of clouds which here our knowledge veil,
In heaven's high temples, where thy praises ring,
I may in sweeter notes hear angels sing.

The character of the "Library of Old Authors" is too well established to render it necessary to say anything in commendation of the manner in which the volume before us is brought out. Even Charles Lamb would have admitted that one of Mr. Russell Smith's reprints was anything but a "heartless sight."

HANSTEEN'S SIBERIA.*

"SIBERIA is bounded on the north by the Frozen Ocean, on the east by the Pacific, on the west by the Ural mountains, and on the South by Chinese Tartary and Little Bucharia. The inhabitants are ignorant, superstitious, barbarous, and inhospitable. It is a region of barren plains, diversified by rocks and morasses, where reigns a dreary silence, broken only by the cries of shuddering travellers in sledges." Somewhat in this fashion the honest old geographers of our childhood used to describe Siberia in their treatises; and when the pictorial ethnographer of the same period collected together the members of the human family into a group—in which, by the way, the Englishman was always shown to have very much the best of it as to appearance—it was only the fur coats which he gave to the Samoyede and Tungusian that made them a whit more respectable than the South Australian. In fact, it seemed to be admitted on all hands that the Asiatic dominions of the Czar were in every way savage. No child was ever known to call the end of the hearth-rug Siberia, or set its doll to rule over a tribe of Ostyaks represented by the cylindrical family of a Noah's Ark. The instructors of youth at the present day perhaps employ a style somewhat less trenchant, but still the general impression conveyed by them is that Siberia is not the country a sane man would select for a tour, much less for residence.

If it were not, therefore, such a complete *bouleversement* of established ideas, it would be a pleasant surprise to learn from a competent authority that cookery that would not disgrace the *Trois Frères*, and champagne which the *Veuve Clicquot* might be proud to own, are to be found in Siberia—that the piano is not an unknown instrument on the other side of the Ural chain—that "society" there can get up balls and evening parties, and turn out for its afternoon drive very much as in Paris or in London. City civilization, however, is pretty nearly the same all over the world, and, as there are cities in Siberia, we might perhaps, on reflection, have suspected the existence of such phenomena. But Professor Hansteen discovered something more. He found in Siberia a mine of honesty, kindness, and hospitality. The rich vied with one another in doing the honours of the country. The peasants—for there seem to be no poor in Siberia—got ready the best room and killed the fatted hen on the stranger's arrival. Payment was out of the question. The traveller was with difficulty permitted to deposit before the obras a few kopeks to be expended in the purchase of wax candles. This obras, which is the image or picture of some saint, and supplies the place of an oratory, is to be found in nearly every Siberian interior—for they are good, pious people, these terrible savages. They recognise, too, the kindred virtue of cleanliness. A bath-house is a constant adjunct to even the humblest establishments—wood-work, furniture, and utensils are scrubbed up to the Dutch pitch of spotlessness, and where they cannot scrub they scrape. Further, we learn that in this country travelling, if not actually luxurious, is at least moderately comfortable, free from difficulties, and remarkably cheap—

* *Souvenirs d'un Voyage en Sibirie*. Par Christophe Hansteen, Directeur de l'Observatoire de Christiania. Traduits du Norvégien par Madame Colban. Paris, 1857.

that there is river scenery striking enough to tempt those who are tired of the Rhine and the Danube—and that the only drawbacks worth mentioning are the midges, the heat of the summers, and the excessive politeness of the Government officials. All this, and a great deal more, equally incompatible with the statements of the old geography-book, did Professor Hansteen observe during his scientific expedition into the heart of Siberia in the years 1828-9.

As the name is probably new to many of our readers, it may be as well to state that Professor Hansteen is a Norwegian by birth, and at present director of the Observatory of Christiania. He made his *début* as a man of science in the year 1812, when he was awarded a prize and gold medal by the Royal Scientific Society of Denmark for his dissertation on the question "Whether the phenomena of Terrestrial Magnetism were better explained by the theory of one Magnetic Axis, or by that of several?" Most persons now-a-days are aware that the magnetic needle does not point due north and south—in other words, that the magnetic axis does not coincide with the axis of rotation, but makes an angle with it, known as the declination of the needle; and also that the needle dips or inclines in proportion to its proximity to the poles of that axis. Professor Hansteen, having noticed that, although the declinations and inclinations of the needle had been carefully observed in the Southern Hemisphere, and also in the Northern on the north coast of America, no observations of any importance had been made in Siberia, pointed out to King Charles John, in 1824, the great advantages to science likely to arise from sending a properly organized expedition into that country. In 1827 the matter was laid before the Storting, and—to the honour of Norway be it said—a sufficient sum of money was granted without a moment's hesitation, although the immediate benefits to the country from such an enterprise would be necessarily trifling.

The requisite arrangements with the Russian Government having been made, on the 19th of May in the following year Professor Hansteen sailed for St. Petersburg, accompanied by Lieutenant Due, an officer of the Norwegian navy. After some delay at the capital, in consequence of an oversight which the elaborate organization of the Russian Douane prevented from being readily rectified, the travellers pursued their journey; and passing through Old Novgorod, Moscow, and Nischni Novgorod, they reached Ekatherinenburg, the first city on the eastern side of the Ural, on the 31st of August. Here they availed themselves of the opportunity of visiting the Savodi, or gold and platinum works, in the neighbourhood. A very admirable practice obtains in these Savodi. The inspector, whether it be a private or an Imperial Savod, is bound to keep open house—at least for all strangers who come properly recommended—and for this purpose an annual sum is allowed him. The attention shown is in a direct ratio with the weight of the traveller's credentials; and as Professor Hansteen was well provided in this way, he was supplied with tea, coffee, liqueurs, madeira, champagne, caviar, two Cossack servants, and other luxuries. At Tobolsk, the expedition was obliged to wait some weeks for snow to enable sledges to travel. Up to this, a britschka drawn by three or five horses had been the vehicle used, and in this way from 100 to 160 versts per day, including stoppages, may be easily managed, for the gallop is the pace preferred by Russian horses:—

When the coachman sees that the travellers are ready [says M. Hansteen], he cries, *Sav sem* (all right). The peasants who are holding the horses, let them go, and away they dart, like wild beasts. The peasant driver is, like the Russian of the lower orders generally, a very good sort of fellow; and, if you are not satisfied with him, you need not hesitate to give him a cuff, or a smack of the whip, adding the little term of endearment—*Sukkin sin* (son of a pig). There are only two classes in Russia—the nobility, which includes all the functionaries, and the muschiks, or peasants, artisans, traders, &c., who wear the caftan and long beard. The muschik is always quite resigned to either cuffs or lashes.

At Tobolsk, the party were present at a wedding, and were made acquainted with the routine of a Siberian courtship in humble life. Professor Hansteen's description would occupy too much space, but we may give the substance of it. When a young man of the lower orders thinks he is in a position to marry comfortably, he goes to an elderly female, called the Svacha—a sort of professional go-between—who knows all the marriageable girls in the neighbourhood. He mentions to her what style of person he prefers, explains what virtues he especially admires, and so forth. If the Svacha can write, she keeps a list to refer to in such cases—if not, she must trust her memory. Having selected a suitable damsel, she goes to her, tells her that So-and-so has made up his mind to marry, that he is steady and industrious, and owns a *samavarr*. The *samavarr* is that peculiar engine for making tea, with the appearance of which we are now pretty familiar, and the possession of one is a great point in a young man's favour. If the Svacha perceives that her young friend is open to an offer, she arranges a meeting on some neutral ground—the church, for instance—and this constitutes the first act, called the *smotrenie*, or contemplation, because the principals, being too nervous to talk, merely look at one another. Then it is that the Svacha's generalship is called into play. She has to run from one to the other, dealing out eulogium and encouragement freely, so as to bring about the second meeting, or *svidanie*, which takes place at the house of one of the parties. A youth blessed with boldness or high conversational powers will sometimes contrive to say something to his intended on this occasion; but, in most cases, he reserves himself for the *rukobitie*, or join-

ing of hands, which amounts to a betrothal. If he fail here, he has got another chance. On the evening before the wedding, a fête, called the *devitschnik*, is celebrated, at which the bride elect lets down her back hair, and bids adieu to her companions; and then, next day, comes the wedding, or *svadba*, the fifth and last act of what, as M. Hansteen says, is a tragedy or comedy, according to the *dénouement*. The ceremony which he witnessed had something of the former in it; for the bridegroom was a most unprepossessing youth—the bride was married against her will—and her old lover, who was a serf, and not at liberty to marry without his master's leave, had to wait on the unhappy couple as they sat at the bridal feast.

Even worse than this may happen to a serf. If he exhibits any indication of talent, his owner will sometimes send him to Germany, France, or England, to study chemistry, or mechanics, or whatever may be made most available afterwards. The Russian's susceptibility of cultivation is remarkable; and the chances are, that he comes back a polished and highly-educated man. As long as he is in his owner's good graces, all goes tolerably well—although he is a chattel, he at least lives like a gentleman. But a day not unfrequently comes when, from caprice or passion, the proprietor strips off the trappings, puts on the yoke, and sends him to work, under the lash, with the rest of the team. Baron Humboldt, on hearing that a young man, whom he knew to hold a high position among men of science, was the property of Demidoff, said it sounded as strange to him as the question, "Who owns Berzelius, Oersted, or Arago?"

From Tobolsk the travellers proceeded to Irkutsk, the seat of the Government of Eastern Siberia. Here they parted company for a time, Lieutenant Due going further eastwards to Yakutsk, while Professor Hansteen, who wished to carry his observations as far to the north as possible, took boat and descended the Angara and Jenisei rivers to Turuchansk. On these rivers the porogs or rapids form the voyager's chief difficulty. The passage of one seems to be an exciting affair, and to require considerable skill on the part of the boatmen. The channel is studded with sharp rocks; and, as the torrent sweeps along at the rate of about sixty miles an hour, if the boat strikes, or from any cause presents a broadside to the stream, she is certain to be swamped. Consequently, all the efforts of the crew are directed to avoiding the rocks, and at the same time keeping stem and stern with the current. As soon as they come within earshot of the roar of the porog, the pilot gives the order *Sadite* (take your seats). This is followed by *Molite Bogu* (pray to God), upon which every man turns to the obras, which is nailed up in a conspicuous place, and makes the sign of the cross, while the captain repeats aloud a short prayer, and then commands the rowers *Grebite silno* (row vigorously). The pilot takes his station at the bow, having in his hand a white handkerchief to make signals with. Four men go to the helm. The boat darts along faster and faster every minute. The captain shouts *Silno, silno*, and every muscle is strained in order to keep steerage way on her. At last the speed slackens—the river becomes quiet again—the pilot wipes his face with his signal-flag, and walks aft to congratulate the captain—and the crew, exclaiming, *Slava tebu Bogu* (praised be the Lord), take a little brandy. After all, the danger appears to be very small, except when the river is low; and the novelty and excitement must be worth some risk:—

It was a pleasure-trip to us [says Professor Hansteen]. As far as the eye could reach we saw one unbroken cataraet, stretching away for ten versts before us—a succession of white-capped waves, confined by two perpendicular walls of black rock, with a strip of blue sky for a roof. It is a marvellous slide (*glissoire*); and, seeing that Switzerland has been so thoroughly explored, and Mont Blanc so often ascended, I fancy the time is not far distant when some rich Briton, tired of foggy England, will start for the porogs of the Angara.

From Turuchansk they returned, retracing the route they had already travelled—with the exception of an excursion to Astrakan and the country of the Kirghises—and arrived safely at Christiania, after an absence of twenty-five months.

It is impossible to read these *Recollections of Travel in Siberia* without regretting that they did not make their appearance three or four years sooner. At the time when everything relating to Russia had such an intense interest for us, a book like this would have been doubly welcome, but at present the Czar and his people are beginning to be a drug in the market. Still, these sketches have a peculiar value in this, that they come from a man whose nationality, and, as far as we can judge, whose character also, render it probable that he is an impartial witness. His statements, on the whole, agree closely with the accounts we have received. The Russian peasant appeared to him the same down-trodden being he has been always represented—not remarkable for wisdom or brilliancy of intellect—in fact, inclining rather to stupidity, but withal an honest creature. He found the Russian gentleman, if a good specimen, high-minded and warm-hearted—if a bad one, combining craftiness with a sort of latent ferocity; but, good or bad, always clever, polished, and, in general, highly accomplished. The majority of those that Professor Hansteen met were of the former description; but in cases like one or two that came under his notice—where a noble can give a lady a box on the ear, or break his friend's head with a decanter, and then send the wounded man home exposed to a Russian frost, whereby death ensues—we suspect that a very little scraping would suffice to show the Tartar.

But Professor Hansteen's great virtue is his thorough geniality

and *bonhomie*. It is clear he rather prides himself on his power of being a little unprofessorial occasionally. When he appeared on horseback on the parade at Irkutsk, a lady observed that he rode like a groom, and not like a Professor, intending to pay a compliment to his equestrianism—"as if," says M. Hansteen, "a Professor was a being incapable of anything practical!" On another occasion he displayed his practicality in an amusing manner. When Dechanger, the Khan of the Kirghises, expressed a desire to see some Norwegian feats of activity, the Professor seated himself upon a bottle, with a candle in each hand, and performed the popular trick of lighting one by means of the other, amid the applause of a crowded house. He then balanced himself upon a chair, and flourished his legs over the back of it—after which he walked on his hands, and turned several summersets, and wound up with one of the national dances of Norway. It is not surprising that he completely won the heart of the Khan, and also that of the Khaness Fatima, who witnessed the exhibition from her private box. No wonder that a man with such a temperament—with such a fine healthy contempt for the notions of those who would have called this "making a fool of oneself"—was welcomed by the Siberians, who were always sorry to lose him.

If the wealthy Briton Professor Hansteen speaks of his meditating a tour in Siberia for next summer, we recommend him to take a leaf from the Professor's book; and then the *Tooley-street to Tobolsk*, or the *Punt and the Porog*, which of course he will write, will be a much pleasanter work than a travelled Briton's generally is.

THE AQUARIUM.*

THE sea-beast movement has assumed of late such very formidable dimensions, that we can easily understand, although we do not sympathize with, the feelings of those who look upon the monsters of the deep which we have introduced into our drawing-rooms with hardly more toleration than that with which the courtiers of Pharaoh must have regarded the frogs who came up into the King's chambers. Ere long, we have no doubt, the great public will get heartily tired of Aquaria, and will consign them without remorse to that gulf of oblivion which has swallowed so many of the fashions of our fathers, and which yawns for so many of our own. As instruments, however, in the hands of the naturalist, both fresh and sea-water tanks will continue to be highly valued. It is impossible for the most unwearied diligence to watch animals in their native haunts one half so carefully as can easily be done in our own homes; and many mysteries of the lower forms of life await the solution which will be given to them by the labours of scattered Aquarians, assisted by—

The slow, sweet hours that bring us all things good.

It is well that the Aquarium fashion should have existed, even if it be destined utterly to pass away. To not a few to whom it has brought a mere smattering of knowledge, it has given many ideas which may hereafter fructify, and which may tend perhaps to indispose them to various forms of error which are only too widely spread. Many, also, who perhaps do not even inquire at all into the nature or the habits of the creatures with which aquaria are stocked, may be led by the beauty of some of them to observe, at least with an æsthetic purpose, the tenants of the stream and of the sea-shore. It may be that, as the interest in Nature increases, the arts may owe much to forms which have hitherto been little regarded; and buildings may not improbably arise which may, with even greater propriety than the Campanile of Florence, be described as "coloured like a morning cloud, and chased like a sea shell."

The work before us is a respectable but not a very valuable addition to Aquarian literature. Its object is to give a catalogue of the animals which may be kept with most advantage by the amateur, with short notes on their habits and peculiarities. It deals largely in quotations. Indeed, a very considerable portion of it consists simply of extracts from other writers; but this, although it takes away from the literary merit of the performance, cannot be said to lessen its utility. The fair owners of Mr. Alford Lloyd's little tanks do not always possess the works of Mr. Gosse, Professor Bell, or Professor E. Forbes, and may not be sorry to have the compilation which Mr. Sowerby places in their hands. The illustrations are numerous and well coloured, and the book appears in the drawing-room costume in which Mr. Reeve is wont to dress that very heterogeneous company—his series of "popular" works. As a treatise to be read, we cannot say much for it; as a pretty dictionary to be consulted by "sweet girl-graduates" in the Natural History Schools, it may very well pass muster.

Mr. Sowerby has collected in his first chapter some useful hints about the management of an Aquarium. Our first care must be of course to imitate nature as closely as possible. The marine aquarium should be an artificial tidepool. A vessel with a sloping back is best; and the arrangement of rock, sand, and gravel, which may be observed in any of the hollows of a rough coast, ought to be carefully followed. After a few hints as to the commonest tenants of the Aquarium, Mr. Sowerby passes in review the more important tribes of sea and fresh water animals. An account of Sponges and Hydroid Zoophytes filled with quotations from Johnston and others, leads on to remarks on Sea-pens,

Aleyonium digitatum, and other cognate forms. Then come the Sea-anemones, with their Protean forms, regular and irregular. The following observations upon the habits of *Anthea Cereus* are curious, and may easily be verified at the Zoological Gardens:—

In watching the tanks at the Regent's-park, I noticed a circumstance showing the very quiet and patient habits of the *Anthea*. A very large, healthy specimen, fixed to a piece of rock near the bottom of the water, with his tentacles beautifully tinted, lay twirling some of them with a gentle and graceful motion, quite active enough to show that the zoophyte was alive and wide awake. Several disengaged threads of conferva had been drawn up from the bottom by means of numerous bubbles of air. On their way up some of them, being attached to the bubbles at both ends, had looped round some of the *Anthea*'s tentacles, whose dead weight apparently, without any voluntary resistance, was sufficient to arrest any further progress of the rising shreds. Thus, suspended in mid-water, were the globules of air holding up the loops of conferva, and these loops keeping the tentacles of the *Anthea* suspended in an unnatural position above the body, a position very similar to that of the arm of a rider passed through one of the looped bands hanging by the side of a carriage-window. The least effort or contraction of the limb would either have broken the loop, or have drawn it down, and released the air globules which suspended it; but no, our *Anthea* preferred "taking it easy;" and, although his tentacles were awkwardly bent, he seemed inclined to rest them as they were. Well, I watched a little while longer then, but no movement. Leaving the tank for awhile, I returned after two or three hours. There were the same tentacles of the same *Anthea*, hanging by the same threads, in the same position. Well, surely when the zoophyte shuts up for the night he will burst his bonds. Oh no! I forgot. The *Anthea* must be supposed never to shut up, for Johnstone says, "tentacula incapable of being retracted within the body." On returning the next morning there were still, in the same relations to each other—the bubbles, the green threads, the *Anthea*, and his arms. Shortly after, however, the animal managed by slow degrees to shift his entire position, and take his place in another part of the tank.

The description of *Caryophyllea Smithii* in the next chapter will interest those who have been accustomed to associate corals only with Southern Seas. Medusa, Sea-urchins, and Star-fishes follow in order. The account of the strange worm named provisionally *Amphitrite Egeana* by the late Professor E. Forbes will be new to many. Mr. Sowerby recommends to persons who have time for careful observations the study of the *Entomostraca*, which can readily be carried on by help of the Aquarium. The history of the water-spiders and of the air-bell which they construct, is as strange as a fairy-tale. They, as well as water-beetles, are great favourites; but the *Mollusca* have been less popular. The caution which the subjoined anecdote conveys with respect to the unamiable dispositions of some of their number is worth attending to:—

Mr. Gosse relates that having placed a large specimen of *Anthea cereus* in the aquarium, with three individuals of *Eolis papillosa*, he found, on visiting the tank one day, that one of the latter was busy eating the tentacles of the former, to which it clung tenaciously in opposition to endeavours made to pull it away. On his next visit, the two other *Eolids* had joined in the carnage. All three exhibited signs of great fierceness, adhering to parts between the anthers by the point of the foot, and stretching forwards to the point of attack, erecting and reversing their branchiae. When removed to a considerable distance they returned to the charge, from any part of the vessel, as long as they remained in it.

Some remarks on the Mud-fish of the Gambia do justice to that ill-used creature, which has been depicted as far less good-looking than he really is. The luckless Water-newt is also vindicated from the suspicion of being poisonous. The horror with which this animal, as well as the toad, is regarded, arises partly from its strange form, and partly from the acrid moisture on the surface of its skin. Mr. Sowerby thinks that if this secretion touched an open wound, it might tend to increase inflammation, but no other bad effects are to be apprehended.

One good effect of the extension of the study of the humbler forms of life will undoubtedly be that many creatures which have been destroyed wherever found, from an idle fear of their dangerous character, will be allowed to rest in peace. It is more than possible that far more important results may follow from a familiarity with our less-honoured co-dwellers in this planet Tellus. It has been said, with great truth, that man has taken far too few animals into alliance with him. How many diseases of ourselves, of beasts, and of plants, may we be able to annihilate, when the Aphis and all the microscopic tribes become as amenable to our control as the camel and the elephant! Here, as in many other cases, the weak things of the world are chosen to confound the strong.

WELD'S VACATIONS IN IRELAND.*

IF the numberless literary characters who gleefully pack up their portmanteaus in the weary fag-end of summer, would only grasp the fact that the days of easy travel-writing are gone by, the public would be a great gainer, and the trunk-maker a great loser. The traveller of the present time must be a Huc or a Livingstone to be even endurable in print. The home circuit of exploration is thoroughly exhausted. Some ten generations of annual describers have made us familiar with every feature of every landscape and every city in Western Christendom. We can count every stone on the Bridge of Sighs; and as we read the nine hundredth description of it, we sadly feel that, even in its disused decadence, it can still inflict a pang. We are weary of the exquisite valleys and the startling precipices, the picturesque peasantry and the superstitious priesthood, whose performance right through three volumes we can predict with as much accuracy as we can those of Harlequin and

* *Popular History of the Aquarium of Marine and Fresh Water Animals and Plants*. By George Brettingham Sowerby, F.L.S. London: Reeve. 1857.

* *Vacations in Ireland*. By Charles Richard Weld. London: Longmans. 1857.

Columbine. Our soul sickens of Norway fiords; and Mont Blanc is an utter abomination.

But a description of Ireland now-a-days is the very Quixotism of book-making. England knows Ireland as well as a man knows the corn that has afflicted his spirit from early youth. She has given us foreign invasions, domestic rebellions, and in quieter times the manly sport of landlord shooting; and in our agonized efforts to discover some effective opiate we have poured upon her hordes of commissioners, and statisticians, and tourists. Every particle of curious fact or marvellous falsehood that a land peculiarly rich in both could furnish, has been carried off and marketed. Gleaner has followed gleaner, until even Sir Francis Head could scarcely find wherewithal to compose one of those piquant syllabuses which are his highest literary aim. It is not therefore surprising that the graces of Mr. Weld's composition should be somewhat marred by that painful disease—a perfect inanition of material. The highest literary powers will not bear the strain of a constant effort to make something out of nothing, and Mr. Weld deserves credit that he has fulfilled his contract with his bookseller without being oftener absolutely dull. But his expedients for defacing the requisite amount of paper are often very desperate. Rapturous descriptions of scenery are an old device; and he is thoroughly alive to what may be called the mileage value of epithets in the printer's hands. We must presume that it is from a similar motive that he has such a taste for quotations, and that—in the words of Sir Benjamin Backbite—long rivulets of poetry are made to meander through broad meadows of margin. But we feel that a philosopher must be indeed hard put to it for matter when he condescends to give us a detailed account of his own flirtations to amuse us. Even in the realm of fiction, to which by long prescription love-scenes rightfully belong, we often think that novelists abuse their privilege, and cloy us with a sweatmeat. But there is a perfect novelty in the frankness with which Mr. Weld recounts to us *in propria persona* the chronicle of his flirtation with an Irish young lady, and gives her residence, together with the date, place, and occasion of the scenes which he describes, with a minuteness which must obviously identify her to every one acquainted with the neighbourhood. She herself, if this book should meet her eye, will no doubt be touched with the vividness with which Mr. Weld recollects their *tête-à-tête*s in an Irish car, and their solitary rambles among the rocks, and their gay dances by moonlight on the cliffs of the Atlantic. It will gratify her also to learn that the gay Lothario did not do all these foolish things without many hesitating doubts as to “how it would all end;” and that at last he made his abrupt departure from the house of her relation because, “as he had no intention of making any serious declaration, it was time for him to be off.” There will be something, too, exquisitely gratifying in his record that “many attempts were made to overturn his resolution.” And if she be a docile Celt, she will admire the true mercantile spirit of the Saxon, who can find a market even for his flirtations, and can turn an honest penny by the humorous tale of the foolish kindness of his hosts in Ireland.

In spite of these grave defects, there is enough in the book to show that if the author, instead of trying to galvanize a decaying subject, had confined himself to scientific matters, with which he is thoroughly familiar, he would have met with great success. There is a good deal of very sprightly anecdote, imaginative as such anecdotes generally are, concerning the habits of various animals, among whose haunts the author's rambles led him. The seal is not exactly the sort of animal a poet would select as an emblem of constant love; but the following tale touchingly shows that blubber and pathos are not absolutely antithetical. It leads us to hope that the observant eye of science may still further extend the domain of sentiment, and that an oyster may even yet be crossed in love:—

A young seal was domesticated in the house of a farmer near the sea shore in Ireland. It grew apace; its habits were innocent and gentle; it played with the children, was familiar with the servants, and attached to the house and family. In summer its delight was to bask in the sun; in winter, to lie before the fire; or, if permitted, to creep into a large oven—the common appendage to an Irish kitchen. A particular disease attacked the black cattle, many of which died. An old hag persuaded the credulous owner that the mortality among his cattle was owing to his retaining about his house an unclean beast—the harmless and amusing seal—and that it should be got rid of. The superstitious man caused the poor creature to be carried in a boat beyond Clare Island, and thrown into the sea.

The next morning the seal was found quietly sleeping in the oven. He had crept through an open window and taken possession of his favourite retreat.

The cattle continued to die; the seal was again committed to the deep at a greater distance. On the second evening, as the servant was raking the kitchen fire, she heard a scratching at the door; she opened it, and in came the seal. It uttered a peculiar cry, expressive of delight, at finding itself once more at home; and, stretching itself on the hearth, fell into a sound sleep. The old hag was again consulted. She said it would be unlucky to kill the animal, but advised that its eyes should be put out, and then thrown into the sea. The deluded wretch listened to the barbarous suggestion, and the innocent creature was deprived of its sight; and a third time, writhing in agony, was carried beyond Clare Island, and thrown into the sea. On the eighth night after the harmless seal had been devoted to the Atlantic, it blew a tremendous gale. In the pauses of the storm a wailing noise was at times faintly heard at the door, which the servant concluded to be the *baneshee* (the harbinger of death in a family). The next morning, when the door was opened, the seal was found lying dead upon the threshold.

There is also a not less marvellous pike, who broke his skull in a fit of shyness by turning with too great rapidity upon a post, and then leapt upon dry land to have it set by a doctor who happened to be standing on the bank. Equally remarkable is a

salmon, who is so strong that he is tugged at from morn to dewy eve by men relieving each other, and gets away at last. And the quadrupeds of this favoured island are not to be outdone by the fish. It appears that Irish hunters, who discover when they are in mid-air that the leap is rather wider than they had reckoned on, are able to take a supplementary spring from nothing at all, in order to complete it. There seems to be no physical reason why this process should not be continued indefinitely, and the Irish horse at last emulate his rival the cow by fairly jumping over the moon. We will not dwell on the minor wonders of birds diving to the depth of thirty feet—of fish in whose stomachs other fish, Jonah-like, disport themselves, alive if not merry—of houses dug out whole from an Irish bog—or of another bog swelling and then bursting, like a punctured haggis, and deluging the country around with mud. We prefer to recommend to our readers the accounts of Lord Rosse's telescope and the manufacture of paraffine, in which sober science has cooled the author's glowing fancy, and which form accordingly the most valuable chapters of the book. In describing the progress and the machinery of the monster telescope, he falls into the error, common to scientific men, of overrating the technical knowledge of uninitiated readers. But that is an error which can be readily pardoned in the present case, for the instrument has become so thoroughly one of the acknowledged Irish lions, that no room was left for a popular description of it. More interesting, because more novel, is his account of the factory of the Irish Peat Company. The main product which chemistry has succeeded in extracting from that very unpromising material is a species of wax-candle, which chemists in their peculiar Latinity call paraffine—meaning thereby that it has very little affinity with any other chemical substance. Most persons recollect the flourish of trumpets with which Lord Shaftesbury, some nine years ago, lighted a couple of paraffine candles on the table of the House of Commons, and predicted that the bogs would prove an Irish California. It did not occur to him that, though bogs were cheap, it was no necessary *sequitur* that the manufacture of them should be also cheap. It has been said that going to the moon is a mere question of finance; and many of the greatest scientific discoveries are in truth only more economical modes of doing what could have been done before. The California of Ireland, therefore, yielded but little wealth, till many years of experiments had reduced the price of the wax-candles, which in their raw state cover half the county of Mayo. But now the manufacture of paraffine has become remunerative—so that we may consider ourselves secure for the future from being again exposed to the danger of total darkness by a Russian war. And paraffine is not the only achievement of a peat bog. That it contained “an excellent black pigment, darker than ivory black,” we had often sufficiently convinced ourselves by an inspection of our clothes after a Highland excursion; but we were not prepared to hear that it was one of Mr. Dow's many adversaries, and that a ton of it would produce ten gallons of powerful spirit. Poor Father Mathew, how it would have grieved his righteous soul to think that the very earth over which he walked was soaked in alcohol!

We would gladly have spoken more favourably of this book; for whatever its value may be, the author's powers are unquestionably great. The few purple patches to which we have called attention are very disappointing, for they only serve to show how well he might have succeeded if he had only been careful to provide himself with that first necessary of composition—something to say. Like his own Irish hunters, his leap is ambitious, but it starts from nothing at all; and we heartily pity Irish riders if the process is as unpleasant in the one case as by sad experience we have found it in the other.

THE TWO ARISTOCRACIES.*

THE steady supply of novels by certain well known authors is one of the peculiar features of the present state of literature. Where the last generation had one Walter Scott, we have, besides monthly novelists, Mr. James, Mrs. Gore, Mrs. Marsh, and a long list of other more or less well-established writers, whose tales come out as regularly as Dr. Cumming's prophecies or Sir Archibald Alison's histories. Of course the merits of the names on so extensive a list must be very various; but one peculiarity distinguishes all their performances alike—one and all, they produce articles of commerce. Sometimes the novel of the season may be a little better, sometimes a little worse; but, given the name of the author, we know what we have to expect in the way of amusement, just as we know when a particular tailor's coat will begin to look bright at the seams, or when his trousers will become baggy at the knees. In criticising books of this kind a reviewer's task is much simplified. We know, in a general way, what we are to have beforehand; and after we have ascertained that Mr. James's mediæval travellers are up to the mark, that his criminal trial is properly put upon the stage, that Mrs. Gore's marquis “shows himself such,” and that Mrs. Marsh has not put too much sugar in her pathos, we feel like the physician who, when called in to advise on the doings of an apothecary, is quite happy provided Mr. Bolus has not exceeded in the matter of calomel, or Mr. Lint in the article of leeches.

After a due examination of the *Two Aristocracies*, we are happy to be able to certify that the article is rather above than below

* *The Two Aristocracies*. A Novel. By Mrs. Gore. 3 vols. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1857.

the mark. It is not only constructed of sound materials, in a proper and workmanlike manner, but is replete with every modern convenience. Gas is everywhere laid on, and the decorations are in very good taste and well finished. Mark Barneson, the "uncouth, well-grown lad of eighteen," of vol. i. p. 1, is spread over the three volumes very equably, and ends in being a rather more than middle-aged grandfather. He is one of the two aristocrats—being a Birmingham engineer, who, by dint of dropping his h's and making money in iron-works, tries very vigorously, for a volume and a half, to be a hard-headed, hard-handed, middle-class hero. Towards the middle of the book, however, he goes off into sentiment, and very nearly into bankruptcy, forming views about the relation between his "order" and the landed aristocracy which are more like the aspirations of Young England than those usually attributed to middle-aged Birmingham. The other aristocrat, Lord Arden, is a great Warwickshire baronet, who has lately contrived to disinherit and appropriate a peerage supposed to have been long extinct. He and the iron-master marry the two daughters of the manufacturer in whose establishment Barneson had been an apprentice. As for Mrs. Barneson, her character consists, first, in her having lamed herself for life by falling off a window-seat, on which she had climbed in order to get a last look at Mr. Barneson, with whom she was at that time secretly in love—and, secondly, in being always called "Poor pretty Letty" whenever there is occasion to speak of her. She is like one of those lame ducks to wring whose neck out of hand would be at once a mercy and a satisfaction. Lady Arden, on the contrary, is one of the handsome termagants who are usually introduced into novels like the *Two Aristocrats* as a contrast to the "poor pretty" young women in whose mouths butter refuses to melt. Her husband marries her professedly as a matter of sentiment, but really as a speculation. He tries, after a certain time, to coax her into giving him a power of attorney by which her fortune—which is settled to her separate use—may be put in his power. She refuses to do so without proper advice. From that fatal hour he always calls her "Lady Arden," having formerly condescended so far as to speak to her as Pussie. They live, in most unconjugal seclusion, in different parts of the palace which he inherits from his father on the very day after their quarrel. The story gets on at a great rate through the latter part of the second volume—one of the aristocrats having a family, and passing from youth to middle age with surprising rapidity, whilst the other has only one daughter, and vegetates in a very uncomfortable manner in solitary grandeur. At length "poor pretty Letty" dies—conduct which, in a novel, might have been expected of a young woman of her high principles, with a doting husband, a couple of children, and a sister fondly attached to her and deeply dependent on her. Her husband gives up his house and buys another, which he thinks will please his daughter, and Lady Arden and her daughter come and stay there. The love-making is not badly done. There is a Lord Bernard, who marries the manufacturer's daughter, and a Cumberland baronet, who marries the peer's daughter. In the former case, the marriage comes first, and the difficulties afterwards; and, in the latter, the difficulties come first, and the marriage afterwards, which breaks the uniformity well enough. Then the commercial aristocrat is nearly ruined, and is brought through in safety by the detection of his partner's villainy; and the landed aristocrat has a paralytic stroke, and during his recovery discovers his wife's affection, which gives the structure a certain unity.

These are the principal points in the story, and Mrs. Gore's readers will see that, when properly put together, with well-mixed byplay and a good coat of moral, they are likely to be suitable for seaside lodgings during the summer months. The byplay is as well worked up as the most superior mortar. Indeed, it is about the best part of the whole book. There are club dandies, country neighbours, who gossip and backbite as naturally as possible, and oddly enough, some very correct views as to sheriff's levies and the law of bankruptcy. The decorations are chaste, for the female characters marry lords all round, by way of showing the superiority of the commercial classes to the aristocracy, and everybody except the villain gets a fortune.

The moral, perhaps, is the least satisfactory part of the work done and materials provided. As *Punch* once said of a well-known member of the Derby Cabinet—

It's narrow in the withers
And weedy in the back,
But the very thing for a lady
Or a 'igh stepping park' neck.

It is that a man who drops his "h's" may have a very powerful mind, and that, in the enlightened nineteenth century, a lord must not despise a mill-owner. Surely, however, all the world knows that people are in these days so enlightened that, if Beelzebub himself offered them shares in the Inferno Junction, they would prefer his company to that of the oldest lord in his dominions.

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On THURSDAY next, JULY 10th, an EXTRA NIGHT. IL DON GIOVANNI. PICCOLI, OSTOLANI, BELLIZZI, BENVENUTO, COSSI, VIALETTI, and GIUGLINI. The entertainments in the Ballet Department will unite the talents of Madame ROSATI, Mlles. BOSCHETTI and KATRINE. Applications for Boxes, Stalls, and Tickets to be made at the Box Office of the Theatre.

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N.B.—The Opera on the above occasion will commence at Eight o'clock. TUESDAY, JULY 15th.—FRA DIAVOLO. WEDNESDAY.—Madame RISTORI in MACBETH.

NOTICE OF DIVIDEND.

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GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.—This subject being under the consideration of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, the Manufacturers and Contractors who, feeling a deep interest in the inquiry, have associated themselves for the purpose of watching the proceedings, are desirous of obtaining information from those best acquainted with the working of the present system. It has been stated that favouritism is exercised; that the conditions of a Contract are arbitrary, and sometimes tyrannically enforced, whilst, at other times, they are evaded with impunity; that the inspection is sometimes made by ignorant or unqualified Examiners, and sometimes by venal Officers acting under improper influences, and from whose decision there is no appeal. It is desirable that these imputations upon Officials, if true, should be established by evidence before the Committee now sitting. It is also desirable that information be supplied as to the sale of Stores, &c., in the several Departments, whether by Auction, or by private Contract, with the original price of the Article, what it produced on Sale, and at what cost it could be replaced to the Government. Those possessing information upon these points, are respectfully invited to communicate personally, or by letter, with
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16, Cannon-street, City, June, 1857.

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